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APHORISMS IN *PYGMALION* BY GEORGE BERNARD SHAW

Summary. In the modern development of literary criticism and linguistics, there is a growing interest in the aphoristic genre as a source of wisdom. Separate collections of aphorisms are emerging, the science of aphorisms is developing, and we are beginning to study of the theory and history of aphorisms as a literary genre.

Significant interest in aphorisms arose because, their versatility. Aphorisms correspond to the spirit of an era. They are equally close to both science and art, affecting an interaction between scientific and artistic creativity. Aphorisms are at the intersection of science and art, as if it were a kind of link between them. Expressiveness and imagery bring aphorisms together with fiction, synthesizing thoughts, the connection between phenomena, accuracy, and conciseness, relating them to science.

The work of George Bernard Shaw is an interesting case for the study of aphorisms. His plays are a kind of encyclopedia of such wise expressions. Aphorisms in the work of Shaw, filled with vividly persuasive images and lively emotional perceptions of reality, have not lost their relevance today, and retain their clearly instructive character. A study of aphorisms in Shaw's work is of great interest, because his use of aphorism, by virtue of its structural peculiarity and conciseness, acts as a kind of catalyst for thought, leading the reader into moments of personal reflection, teaching us to think – and at the same time, to speak. Shaw perfectly embodies the power of aphorisms in his play *Pygmalion*. His aphorisms not only compel the reader to think, but also help to present his picture of the world, outlining his specific attitude to his contemporary reality.

Aphorisms teach one to think and to speak at the same time. Economy of words, depth of semantics, and the use of vivid imagery, make aphorisms stylistic masterpieces. They enrich the art of rhetoric as an effective tool in the fight against monotony and grayness in language.

Key words: aphorism, semantics, stylistics, artwork, writer's outlook, culture-specific concept, didactic guidelines.

Formulation of research question. Aphorism is an original completed thought, expressed or recorded in a concise and easy-to-remember text, which is often quoted by others in the narrative process of communication. Aphorism achieves a level of direct communication by accentuating the context in which a particular thought is perceived by the surrounding listeners or readers [3, p. 28]. Aphorism as a literary genre characterized by certain additional features. The first characteristic of aphoristic language is the depth of thought, which seeks truth. The author, trying to

creatively and persuasively address a serious problem, conveys his thoughts and his views on a particular problem by using poignant and accessible language. The second characteristic is generalization. Aphorism is read as a generalization that nonetheless promotes transmission of depth of thought. The third (and perhaps most significant) characteristic is brevity. The more concise an aphorism, the deeper its meaning. This also contributes to its memorability. Thus, the fourth characteristic is clarity, specifically precision and expressiveness of thought. The fifth characteristic is then completeness of thought. An aphorism should be complete in both content and understandable without further explanation.

The sixth characteristic is the very art of creating an aphorism. An aphorism should convey not only wise content, but also be well designed in terms of stylistics, through the use of certain vocabulary. An aphorism successfully combines wit, depth of thought, and beauty, which is achieved through the careful use of both thought and design. In other words, according to L.S. Sukhorukov, an aphorism is a one-line novel [2].

Aphorism was the first, and therefore perhaps the main, stage in the development of philosophical thought from ancient times – laying the foundations for our conceptualizations of wisdom. That is why many writers of different literary trends, from ancient times to the present, have developed in their works this kind of. The study of the aphorisms of individual writers is the study of these writers' worldviews, attitudes toward surrounding world, and to people. Many aphorisms contain didactic guidelines, which do not lose their relevance over the years; rather, they acquire new content and meaning in a contemporary context.

Collections of aphorisms often appear in the works of playwrights – but they are usually separated from and not analyzed in those contexts, which reduces the emotional impact of the aphorism on the reader. Consideration of Shaw's aphorisms remains relevant today, especially since they have not been fully explored from the point of view of extending their use and translation beyond the boundaries of a work of art. Shaw puts aphoristic expressions in the mouths of his characters not by chance, but in order to portray a certain idea, perhaps a problem in their particular society, so that the perception of his aphorisms is linked to the context of the whole play, and therein carry a greater emotional direction and provide a better scenario of memorialization of the “catch phrases”.

The play *Pygmalion* was written by Shaw in 1912–1913. The author used the Greek myth of *Pygmalion* in the context of turn-

of-the-century London, presenting his own contemporary interpretation of the myth through the play. Starting from the well-known myth, Shaw creates a polemically sharpened play, the basis of which is a paradoxical, ironic rethinking of the ancient story of Pygmalion and Galatia, and of the great power of their love. However, the play is not about love, as the author repeatedly insists in the afterword and in numerous comments on its stage productions. The theme of the play is the process of restoring the human soul, the spiritual awakening of the individual, and the development of his moral and intellectual potential under the influence of creativity. The play falls into the genre of social comedy, which focuses on issues of great public import.

Among the problems that are solved in the play are social, moral, and scientific ones. The social problems addressed involve criticism of the established prejudices and conventions of bourgeois society; coverage of the destructive impact of poverty on the individual; presenting a realistic view of the lives and welfare of ordinary people, including a condemnation of “Lumpen consumer psychology” as an approach to modern life. The moral side is illuminated through an examination of problems such as scientists' responsibility for the consequences of their experiments, the inadmissibility of experimentation on man, and mockery of bourgeois morality and values. Questions of science are further illustrated through an exploration of the importance of language as a major factor affecting the mental and spiritual development of the individual.

The main conflict of the play is an ideological clash of two different positions in life, as characterized by Professor Henry Higgins and former florist Eliza Doolittle. The development of the plot follows a bet between Professor Higgins and Colonel Pickering: for six months, Professor Higgins undertakes to transform the vulgar florist Eliza Doolittle into a “Duchess”. According to the professor, they are distinguished only by prosperity, as well as good manners and behavior, and proper language.

The *Pygmalion* comedy thus has a compositional structure of drama-discussion. Discussion and open finale are main characteristics of the play. The discussion centers around the ideological conflict between Eliza and Higgins. As a result of her nurturing and developing her natural inclinations, Eliza is a strong and self-confident woman. Eliza wants Higgins to acknowledge these qualities in her. Higgins, who is indifferent to the lady and the flower girl, instead offers her *his* ideal way of being – active and free from the passions of common life. These positions are incompatible, and the character traits of these main heroes remain equally strong – neither one of them will concede to the other. That is why a “happy end” in the relationship model of Higgins-Pygmalion and Eliza-Galatea is impossible. The discussion continues even when the play ends.

All of the plays written by Shaw meet the demands for contemporary theater outlined by Bertolt Brecht, namely that theater must strive to portray human nature as being subject to change and dependent on class affiliation [1, p. 128]. As much as Shaw was indeed interested in the connection between character and position in society, the fact that he made the radical restructuring of the Pygmalion myth the main theme of the play is more clearly evidenced in this case. Indeed, Shaw's work is perhaps better known today than the original myth.

Among literary critics, there is a perception that Shaw's plays promote political ideas more than other playwrights [5, 258]. We

can agree with this thought, because the texts of his plays are imbued with the aphorisms that aptly characterize his contemporary social and political environment. In *Pygmalion*, we find such catchy phrases as: “This is an age of upstarts” and “What is life but a series of inspired follies? The difficulty is to find them to do”. *Pygmalion* is a kind of guide that addresses the problem of determinism, which is why Shaw himself considered it “an outstanding didactic play”. The main problem Shaw addresses in *Pygmalion* is the question of whether society can change people.

Another important issue of the play is the impact of language on a person's life. What gives a person the right pronunciation? Is it enough to learn to speak properly to change your social status? Here is what Professor Higgins thinks about this: “But you have no idea how frightfully interesting is to take a human being and charge her into a quite different human being by creating a new speech for her. It's filling up the deepest gulf that separates class from class and soul from soul”. Shaw paid such considerable attention to the problems of language and speech. The play tackled a serious task in the reality of London society: Shaw sought to attract the attention of the English public to the social consequences and issues of phonetics. In *Pygmalion*, Shaw thus combined two topics that concerned him: the problem of social inequality and the problem of classical English.

Extremely concise (and at the same time exhaustive) definitions of certain objects or phenomena of social reality, which condense the experience of social life, are embedded aphoristically by Bernard Shaw in the speech of his characters. Therefore, Shaw is considered a master of aphorisms. He successfully conveys completed thoughts of instructive or cognitive content in a concise, expressive, and memorable forms. In *Pygmalion*, one can distinguish definitive and “slogan” aphorisms by the way of his characters' expression [4, p. 249].

Definitive aphorisms – such as “What is life but a series of inspired follies?” – define the phenomena of reality in terms of the Shaw's worldview. Aphorisms of this type may be somewhat subjective in nature. “Slogan” aphorisms also proclaim certain beliefs of the author, sometimes calling for certain actions or changes in belief: “Never lose a chance: it doesn't come every day” and “Take it or leave it”.

By examining this content, you can distinguish between instructive- unambiguous aphorisms and paradoxically-ambiguous aphorisms. For example: “Take care of the pence and the pounds will take care of themselves” versus “Time enough to think of the future when you didn't have any future to think of”. These types of aphorisms are prevalent throughout *Pygmalion*, since the whole play is built on the principle of paradox – surprise, strangeness, originality, contradiction to the conventional, traditional view or common sense in content and/or form. The themes of the aphorisms found in *Pygmalion* are thus very diverse.

Conclusions and further research prospects. In conclusion, it can be said that in recent times, more and more people are beginning to understand the importance of being able to speak beautifully, which cannot be done using only official language or simply communicating in “slang”. When it comes to making language (including written text) more beautiful and more expressive, one must incorporate such things as epithets, metaphors, hyperbole, litotes, and comparisons – that is, words used in a figurative sense. What relates us to our particular vocabulary and phraseology? Rarely do we turn to proverbs and “sayings” that make our text more

imaginative, more precise, or more emotional. Meanwhile, the use of aphorisms in our speech and/or text is significant. Aphorisms play a large role in the expressiveness of works of art, describing the relationship between protagonists, nature, etc. As with every Shaw, Eliza, and Professor Higgins in the world, aphorisms above all serve to express one's own point of view – condemning or praising someone or something, anything.

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Магуза А. С., Радецька С. В. Афористика у творі Б. Шоу «Пігмаліон»

Анотація. В умовах сучасного розвитку літературознавства та лінгвістики все більше зростає інтерес до афористичного жанру як джерела мудрості. З'являються окремі збірники афоризмів, розвивається наука про афоризми – афористика, яка займається вивченням теорії та історії афоризму як літературного жанру.

Значний інтерес до афористики виник тому, що в силу своєї універсальності афоризми відповідають духу епохи,

вони однаково близькі як до науки, так і до мистецтва, в них органічно взаємодіють принципи наукової і художньої творчості. Афористика знаходиться на місці перетину науки і мистецтва, будучи як би своєрідною ланкою між ними. Виразність і образність зближують афоризми з художньою літературою, властивість синтезу думок, встановлення зв'язку між явищами, точність і лаконізм ріднять їх з наукою.

Творчість Б. Шоу – цікаве явище з погляду афористики. Його п'єси – своєрідна енциклопедія мудрих виразів. Афоризми Б. Шоу, сповнені яскравими переконливими образами, живим емоційним сприйняттям дійсності, не втрачають своєї актуальності й нині та мають чітко виражений повчальний характер. Дослідження афористики Б. Шоу становить значний інтерес тому, що авторський афоризм через свою структурну особливість, лаконічність, виступаючи своєрідним каталізатором думки, приводить читача до особистого роздуму, вчить мислити і разом із тим говорити. Сила афоризмів у досконалості мовного втілення. Водночас афоризми Б. Шоу не лише змушують читача розмірковувати, а й допомагають уявити авторську картину світу драматурга, а також окреслити відношення письменника до сучасної йому дійсності.

Афоризми вчать мислити і разом з тим говорити. Гранична економія слів, глибина семантики, яскрава образність роблять афоризми стилістичними шедеврами, які, збагачуючи мистецтво риторики, стають дієвим засобом у боротьбі з одноманітністю і сірістю людської мови.

Ключові слова: афоризм, семантика, стилістика, художній твір, світогляд письменника, реалії дійсності, дидактичні настанови.