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“I don’t and won’t trade in affection.”

Affections in George Bernard Shaw’s *Pygmalion*

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Introduction

For my dissertation, I chose to explore the topic of affections, focusing on how characters in a literary work evolve emotionally throughout the narrative. I particularly selected George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*, which I first read for the subject entitled 'Theatre in English Literature', a module taught in my second year of the degree. As the play goes through a different and rich emotional development in characters affections, I considered that this literary work could be suitable for analysis through Affect Theory.

In the process of the completion of this research piece of work, I shall apply several competences that I have acquired during my degree in English Studies and Intensification in English Studies, concerning 'Introduction to Literary Studies in English Language', 'Critical Thinking Through English Literature', and 'Theatre and Drama in English'. Some of the competences for the composition of this final dissertation involve being able to delimit a topic and analyse it according to a chosen relevant theory, systematizing and critically evaluating the material relevant for the research in order to complete my final dissertation methodically and consistently.

Chapter one will provide a brief overview of different critical perspectives on affect. It will begin with Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, in which emotions are linked to three means of persuasion, followed by the prominent work entitled *The Passions of the Soul* –written by René Descartes– which classifies emotions and restricts the concept of 'passion' into bodily perceptions. Johann Mattheson's 'Doctrine of Affections' will be introduced, which examines how musical elements produce certain affections. Victorian and several contemporary perspectives on Affect Theory will also be explained, including Brian Massumi's distinction between affect and emotion, and Ruth Ley's broader analysis of these concepts. I will explore how Massumi and Frederic Jameson conceptualise affect as the blending between mind and body, distinguishing between active and passive affects, as well as focusing on the polarity of *joy* and *sadness*. The perspective on affect offered by Denise Riley connects affect with language, while Silvan Tomkins presents a detailed taxonomy of affects, aligning with Spinoza's perspective on emotions. Finally, Gilles Deleuze's concept of 'becoming' and its influence on Massumi's theory will be discussed, particularly the idea that affect operates beyond individual control, including a comparison with Riley's approach based on language.

Among the different theoretical approaches to emotion, Baruch Spinoza's Affect Theory offers the most suitable framework for my analysis. I will apply his perspective

throughout the following chapters, especially his view on the relationship between mind and body, and the idea that emotions arise from bodily changes influenced by interactions with others. I will also focus on Spinoza's distinction between *joy* and *sadness*, and the classification of affects into active and passive.

According to Spinoza's Theory of Affects, in chapter two, I will proceed to analyse "Active affects. Characters whose actions can shape other character's mental states." I will begin with Colonel Pickering's affection, particularly his kindness, respect, and encouragement towards the learning process of Eliza Doolittle, which contrasts with Higgins's attitude towards her. I will also analyse Pickering's empathy and support to Eliza's learning process and how his encouragement influences her perception of him. His positive guidance helps Eliza to shift her initial frustration toward learning proper English, examining how the experience of 'being affected' by others can alter one's mental state.

Then, I will focus on Mrs. Higgins's affections, emphasising her concern and compassion for Eliza Doolittle. Mrs. Higgin's disapproval of her son's –Henry Higgins's– treatment of Eliza, especially his disregard to her emotions and future, will also be analysed. This will be explored in relation to Spinoza's idea of how interactions with others may influence one's thoughts.

In the third chapter, I will examine the "Passive Affects. Freddy: A character whose emotional state is shaped by external forces". As the title indicates, in this chapter I will explore Freddy's emotions, particularly his admiration and deep affection for Eliza, highlighting his romantic love for her in contrast to Mr. Higgins's attitude to her.

I will devote the fourth chapter to the analysis of what I will call "Shifting affects. Characters whose affects shift from active to passive and vice versa". The first character whose study I will approach in this chapter will be Professor Henry Higgins, focusing on his intellectual pride and dedication to phonetics. His impatience, which occasionally leads to frustration –especially when Eliza struggles with Phonetics lessons– will be examined. I will also consider Higgins's evolving affections toward Eliza Doolittle, as his initial disdain progressively transforms into a form of affection.

I will continue with Eliza Doolittle, another central character in the play. Her emotions, including her hope and motivation to improve her speech, will be analysed, as this will motivate her to seek Higgins's help to enhance her pronunciation. The study will also consider her feelings of frustration and vulnerability during her training process, as

she feels that she is losing her own identity. And I will explain how that is progressively going to change.

This chapter will also examine the polarity of *joy* and *sadness* in Baruch Spinoza's analysis of Affect Theory (Schaefer, 2019, p. 9). This contrast is evident in the relationship between Higgins and Eliza Doolittle, in which moments of joy are combined with instances of sadness, particularly for Eliza, as she struggles to learn proper English.

The last character object of study will be Alfred Doolittle, Eliza's father. I will focus on his cynicism and his joy and discomfort feelings when he obtains wealth unexpectedly, which makes him become a middle-class man. Here, I will also focus on the distinction between joy and discomfort, which are crucial to Baruch Spinoza's analysis of emotions.

Chapter 1
Critical approach: Affect Theory

Throughout the 1990s, the 'affective turn' emerged, marking a period which was particularly characterised by the increase of interest in the notion of affect. Several scholars and philosophers began examining this concept, developing critical theories on the relationship between the body, mind, and emotions. Since then, affect has gained prominence as a field of research, offering insights into the way of how individuals understand and perceive the world. Thus, the 'affective turn' was particularly characterised by the interest in emotion in several disciplines. However, in literary studies, discussions on how affect theory might help us in our interpretation of literature remain in their early stages, as this theory is still emerging and evolving (Ahern, 2024). This chapter focuses on the concept of 'affect', examining the different perspectives of prominent philosophers on affect theory, and its relevance to George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*.

Critics use the term 'affect' to describe a sense of subjectivity that resists conventional methods of understanding the self and society (Cohn, 2018). The study of emotions and affects dates back to Aristotle, who explored these concepts in one of his most significant books, entitled *Rhetoric*. In the second chapter, he defines different types of emotions and examines their role in the methodical stimulation of an audience. Throughout his work, Aristotle highlights the concept of persuasion, which he identifies as acting through three means: the character of the speaker, the audience's emotions, and logical argumentation. Aristotle places particular emphasis on the second, establishing a connection between emotions and judgements, by arguing that persuasion emerges when a speech produces specific emotions that influence on the argument of the individual – hence, 'emotions have the power to modify our judgments' (*Rhetoric* II. 1, 1378a1ff in Rapp, 2023). Scholars whose main focus is on the rhetorical use of emotions also highlight their significance in Aristotle's moral philosophy, as he defines a virtuous person not only by their right action performance, but also by their appropriate emotional responses (Rapp, 2023). In Aristotle's *Rhetoric*, he asserts that a speaker seeks to stimulate emotions not only to encourage but also to guide the audience toward moral improvement.

Following Aristotle, the philosopher René Descartes also examined emotions in his work entitled *The Passions of the Soul*. He did not provide an entire explanation of the unity between mind and body in relation to the emotions, an issue later explored by Baruch Spinoza in his analysis of the Affect Theory. Descartes offers a taxonomy of passions, showing a detailed description of their bodily causes, effects, and functions. (Schmitter, 2021). He distinguishes passions from actions, defining them as perceptions. As the concept of 'passion' was too broad, Descartes restricts its use to perceptions caused by the body. Therefore, he defines passions as 'those perceptions, sensations or emotions of the soul which we refer particularly to it, and which are caused, maintained and strengthened by some movement of the spirits' (AT XI 349, CSM I, p. 338–9 in Schmitter, 2021). This distinction separates passions from non-bodily perceptions, such as voluntary imaginings.

Descartes opposes the correlation established between emotions and judgements offered by Aristotle in his *Rhetoric* by asserting that 'passions are not judgements, since judgements require an act of the will to affirm or deny' (Schmitter, 2021). Through his analysis, Descartes identifies six primary passions: wonder, love, hatred, desire, joy and sadness. He considers the opposition between love and hatred, as well as joy and sadness, while emphasising that desire lacks a direct opposite. The polarity of *joy* and *sadness* is going to be examined in greater depth by Baruch Spinoza. Descartes also argues that passions can be combined, even in contradictory mixtures, such as hope and fear. He highlights the continuous nature of passions, for instance, desire can lead to love, which may then generate joy. Similarly, conflicting emotions may result in sensations of remorse, or repentance (Schmitter, 2021).

Johann Mattheson, a well-known opera composer, introduced an alternative perspective on the perception of affects through his 'Doctrine of Affections', which explores the treatment of emotions in music. Emerging during the Baroque period, the 'Doctrine of Affections' emphasised emotions such as love, sorrow, joy, rage, and pity as fundamental to musical compositions. This connection between music and emotions dates back to ancient Greece, where different affects were associated with the four temperaments: sanguine, choleric, melancholic, and phlegmatic (Dissmore, 2017).

René Descartes also contributed to the 'Doctrine of Affections', considering that the communication of emotions to listeners through sound is influenced by musical elements, such as pitch and time. Matheson particularly examined the role of intervals in

creating specific passions, considering how certain combinations of intervals enhance the perception of affects (Dissmore, 2017). Beyond intervals, the doctrine also highlights instrumental texture as a key expressive aspect. Arcangelo Corelli, for instance, emphasised 'the ability of instrumental music to communicate an idea and appeal to the emotions of the listener' (Dissmore, 2017, p. 5). Thus, the 'Doctrine of Affections', which developed during the Baroque period, is influenced by several musical elements, including, intervals, key, and tempo. Both Johann Mattheson and René Descartes recognised that these elements –particularly intervals– have a crucial role in conveying intended emotions to the listener (Dissmore, 2017).

Affect theory offers a critical approach for Victorian studies because it often depicts Victorians as anxious and worried about emotional states. Another vision of affect has been developed by scholars of Victorian literature, combining aesthetic forms with scientific concepts. This Victorian interest in the physical basis of the mind suggests that Victorian literature may be a precursor to contemporary affect theory, working on Spinoza's ideas and Darwin's theories on the evolution of emotions (Cohn, 2018).

Consequently, affect provides a useful way of analysing how literary forms function. This Victorian focus on the mind will be examined in the following chapters, particularly through an analysis of the affections portrayed in the characters of George Bernard Shaw's Victorian play entitled *Pygmalion*.

The concept of affect has been interpreted in many ways, but one of the most significant definitions is offered by the philosopher Brian Massumi, as he defines affect as 'embodied in purely automatic reactions and most directly manifested in the skin–at the surface of the body, at its interface with things' (Houen, 2020, p. 3). He emphasises that affect makes reference to spontaneous bodily reactions that occur without conscious thought; thus, they occur with the body –specifically the skin– acting as the point of interaction with the external world. According to Massumi, affect is a non-cognitive process in which the body plays a central role without considering the role of the mind. Similarly, the British historian Ruth Leys examines this concept of affect in greater depth, highlighting the work of the philosophers Silvan Tomkins (2008) and Fredric Jameson (Jameson, 1991), who characterised affect as 'nonintentional, bodily reactions' and 'noncognitive, corporeal processes or states' (Houen, 2020, p. 3). This view aligns with Massumi's perspective, as both consider that affect arises from non-cognitive bodily processes, independent of the mind. However, this perspective of affect being a

noncognitive process has created significant controversy among critics, historians, and philosophers. While some argue that affect is entirely rooted in the body, others state that it results from the interaction between body and mind, blending physical and cognitive processes.

Brian Massumi and Fredric Jameson emphasise on the 'structural difference' between affect and emotion. They argue that emotion is a cognitive phenomenon, characterised by 'named' structures of feeling that entail 'the intervention of language'. In contrast, affect refers to 'bodily feelings' that are resistant to language (Houen, 2020, p. 4). This approach, which separates affect from cognition, emotion, and language, is relevant in affect theory. Affect theory primarily focuses on the interconnectedness of beings, asserting that 'no embodied being is independent but rather is affected by and affects other bodies, profoundly and perpetually as a condition of being in the world' (Ahern, 2019, p. 4). Affect theory focuses on the idea that individuals do not exist in isolation, as their emotions and bodily states are influenced by their interactions with others and the world surrounding them. Hence, all living entities are interdependent, which are constantly affecting and being affected by their surroundings. This idea of the affect theory will be examined through the contributions of key philosophers and historians, such as Baruch Spinoza, Denise Riley, Silvan Tomkins, Brian Massumi, and Gilles Deleuze, whose approaches have been crucial in order to develop and expand the principles of affect theory.

Baruch Spinoza's philosophy is crucial to affect theory, as he rejects the dualism between mind and body, emphasising their constant interrelation. Spinoza asserts that 'our body is a finite mode, and so is our mind' (Spinoza, 2002, p. 13), highlighting that the mind has an important role in bodily processes. For instance, when an individual encounters another body, their own body undergoes changes, and the mind perceives those changes, thus, illustrating the link between mind and body. According to Spinoza, emotions and affects arise from changes in bodily compositions during encounters with other bodies, producing 'affection' or the experience of 'being affected' (Houen, 2020). These changes can either increase or decrease an individual's capacity to act. When he mentions the idea of increase, it corresponds to *joy*, whereas when he refers to the notion of decrease, it corresponds to *sadness* (Houen, 2020). Baruch Spinoza identifies the polarity of *joy* and *sadness* as central to the formation of affect. He also considers other relevant affects, such as wonder, hate, hope, and shame. In addition, Spinoza distinguishes

between two types of affects: active and passive. Active affects occur when actions arise from one's own nature, whereas passive affects result from external influences that alter the body.

The poet Denise Riley offers an intriguing perspective on affect by connecting it to language. She examines how the act of writing influences readers, pointing out that this idea occurs through the medium of language rather than a direct connection between writer and reader. Riley states that 'Language does not represent feeling but "does feeling"' (Ahern, 2019, p. 101). According to her, the structure of language –including elements such as syntax, grammar, and vocabulary– is crucial in the creation of affects and it can be 'informative and formative for a person's affective life' (Houen, 2020, p. 7). Denise Riley (2005) claims that individuals become social beings by identifying themselves not only with the structures of language, but also with the affections conveyed through language in order to enable them to interpret and respond to those emotions effectively. In literary studies, this approach is relevant as it allows readers to identify the affections expressed through language that define the characters in a literary work. This idea will be further explained in the analysis of George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*, focusing on how the different affections of the characters evolve throughout the play. In contrast to Riley's emphasis on language, Laurie Ringer asserts that in affect theory, subjectivity arises primarily from the movements of the body rather than the structure of language.

The theorist and psychoanalyst Silvan Tomkins contributed to the affect theory by proposing 'a system of nine distinct and innate affective ranges/pairs: distress-anguish; interest-excitement; enjoyment-joy; surprise-startle; anger-rage; fear-terror; shame-humiliation; disgust; and dissmell' (Tomkins, 2008, p. 6). These affects interact with other elements, including objects, mental and bodily states, other affects, memories, perceptions, and actions. Tomkins (2008) perceives the affect system as an intermediary between the drive system and the cognitive system.

Tomkins points out the fluid relationship between affects and cognition, which depends on the state an individual is experiencing. This aligns with Spinoza's concept of affect as 'the passage from one [affective] state to another' (Spinoza in Houen, 2020, p. 6). As a result, 'affects are autonomous and unattached to a perceiving subject' (Ahern, 2024, p. 101). They exist as abstract and eternal entities that are not fixed to any individual, but they are constantly changing and evolving. This dynamic characteristic of

affect is noticeable in *Pygmalion*, where the characters' emotional state shift throughout the play. These transitions from one affective state to another create emotional responses in the reader, enabling them to be 'affected' by the characters' evolving emotions.

Gilles Deleuze (2019) was another major contributor to affect theory, whose ideas influenced on later philosophers, such as Brian Massumi. Deleuze's philosophy shares several ideas with Baruch Spinoza's approach to affect theory, particularly the distinction between emotions and affects. While emotions, such as anger, fear or joy, are conscious responses emerging from affects, affects themselves are precognitive sensory experiences (Cvetkovich, 2012). Deleuze also reflects on Spinoza's idea about the interconnectedness between body and mind, rejecting the notion of one prevailing the other. In addition, like Spinoza, Deleuze considers the polarity of *joy* and *sadness* as essential in order to understand how emotions influence human behaviour and perception (Deleuze, 1988, p. 50).

Gilles Deleuze's philosophy also emphasises the process of 'becoming', which he defines not as mere transformation or imitation, but a process that produces only itself. He considers affect as central to this concept of 'becoming', highlighting its role in processes of transformation rather than fixed identities (Deleuze, 1988). According to Deleuze, affects are intensities that push bodies into states of becoming, dismantling stable and fixed categories or binaries.

Brian Massumi, one of Deleuze's most prominent interpreters, has provided an excellent analysis of Deleuze's notion of affect. Massumi is a prominent figure in affect theory, as he states that 'the actual bodies are embedded in and affected by networks of relation, rather than abstract conceptions of the body' (Massumi in Ahern, 2024, p. 97). He emphasises that affect is not a property of individual psychology, but a 'prepersonal' intensity inherent in nature, requiring cognition (Massumi in Ahern, 2024, p. 97). For Massumi, affect is a force that operates outside the control of an individual, influencing and shaping bodies in dynamic ways. He also describes affect theory as a 'theory of the ways we are moved without words, a theory where bodies go, thus, a theory of power' (Massumi in Schaefer, 2019, p. 21), emphasising on the precognitive elements, such as emotions, that affect individuals before they are articulated through language. This perspective contrasts with Denise Riley's approach to affect theory, as she considers the structure of language essential in order to develop affection, whereas Massumi focuses on non-verbal, embodied experiences that influence human behaviour.

The different perspectives on affective life offered by Silvan Tomkins (2020), with his nine affect-pairs system, and Brian Massumi (2024), with his emphasis on actual bodies and affects characterised mainly by cognition rather than individual psychology, have significantly influenced research in the humanities (Ahern, 2024). Their contributions are crucial to the development of affect theory and the understanding of how individuals perceive the world.

Recent theories of affect have enhanced our awareness of the shifting interactions between bodies, as they are affected by, and they are also affecting others they engage with and the environments they occupy. Similarly, the affects experienced by characters also impact readers, engaging them with the narrative and the storytelling process. This idea appears in George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*. The following chapters will examine how specific affects determine character development and influence the evolution of the narrative form within the framework of affect theory.

The Affect Theory applied in the methodology of this project is based on Baruch Spinoza's perspective, which closely relates to the characters in George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*. This analysis will examine the characters' emotions through Spinoza's idea that mind and body are not separated, but intertwined. His emphasis on the idea that emotions often emerge from bodily changes when individuals interact with others, leading to new affections or the experience of 'being affected', changing their initial mental state, is also going to be explored. Moreover, the distinction between *joy* and *sadness* will be also considered, as well as his classification of affects into active or passive, which I will use as methodological approach to my analysis, to which I shall add a third classification: that of shifting affects, to study those characters whose affects shift from active to passive.

Chapter 2

Active affects.

Characters whose actions can shape other character's mental states

This chapter examines Colonel Pickering's affections, focusing on his kindness and respect towards Eliza, which contrasts with Higgins's treatment of her. Pickering experiences emotions such as wonder at Eliza's transformation, as well as comfort, encouragement, and hope regarding her rapid progress in speech and manners. By the end of the play, he feels guilt and shame, as he recognises the emotional neglect both he and Higgins showed Eliza. The chapter will also explore Mrs. Higgins's emotions, particularly her concern and sympathy for Eliza's well-being. She expresses wonder at Eliza's improvement, but anger towards Higgins's attitude to Eliza, and ultimately compassion, as she allows Eliza to stay in her home after the conflict with Higgins.

2.1. Colonel Pickering's use of kindness to educate Eliza

Colonel Pickering is a prominent character throughout *Pygmalion*, as he constantly supports and encourages Eliza during her learning process and transformation into a lady. From the beginning, he expresses hope in her potential, offering himself to cover the costs of her lesson and treating her with respect since they met.

In Act II, Pickering's refined manners are noticeable when he welcomes Eliza into Higgins's house, addressing to her with politeness, 'Won't you sit down?' (*Pygmalion*, Act II, p. 27). This initial act of kindness characterises his respectful treatment to Eliza throughout the play, reinforcing her confidence and motivation to learn proper English. Unlike Higgins, who frequently speaks to Eliza with impatience and cruelty, Pickering keeps calm, showing empathy in his speech, even when he disagrees with Higgins's harsh behaviour. For instance, when Higgins suggests that Eliza might spend money on alcohol, Pickering challenges him with the question, 'Does it occur to you, Higgins, that the girl has some feelings?' (*Pygmalion*, Act II, p. 32), always employing good manners in his speech. His concern highlights Higgins's lack of emotional intelligence and reinforces Pickering's support and encouragement towards Eliza.

Moreover, both Pickering and Mrs. Pearce try to control Higgins's manners, agreeing on Eliza's right to understand the conditions of her training. Pickering insists

respectfully, 'Excuse me, Higgins […]. If this girl is to put herself in your hands for six months for an experiment in teaching, she must understand thoroughly what she's doing' (*Pygmalion*, Act II, p. 33). Later, when Eliza enters the room where Pickering, Higgins and her father are waiting, Pickering expresses wonder at her transformed appearance. After Eliza reveals her father's profession, she requests to be addressed as 'Miss Doolittle' in a more formal way, sounding more genteel. Pickering agrees and replies by saying, 'I beg your pardon, Miss Doolittle. It was a slip of my tongue' (*Pygmalion*, Act II, p. 50), evidencing, once again, his kindness.

During one of Higgins's Phonetics lessons, when he becomes really aggressive and demands Eliza to recite the alphabet, Pickering steps in to encourage her by stating, 'Do what he tells you; and let him teach you in his own way' (*Pygmalion*, Act II, p. 51). This statement reminds us of Spinoza's classification of emotions into *active* or *passive affects* (Houen, 2020), as it is noticeable how Eliza experiences *passive affects* with Pickering after his statement, reinforcing how external influences may alter other bodies. Despite the harsh comments made by Higgins's impatience, which hurt Eliza's emotions as she ends up crying, Pickering offers her comfort and encouragement, which is foregrounded when he says, 'No, no. Never mind crying a little, Miss Doolittle: you are doing very well; and the lessons won't hurt. I promise you I won't let him drag you around the room by your hair' (*Pygmalion*, Act II, p. 52). His gentle support acts as a clear contrast to Higgins's lack of consideration and evidences the significant emotional support Eliza receives from him. Moreover, Pickering's kind words, such as 'Good. Splendid, Miss Doolittle' (*Pygmalion*, Act II, p. 51), not only keep Eliza's motivation but also reflect his hope in Eliza's eventual transformation. Hence, Pickering's character represents a positive emotional influence to Eliza, as Spinoza describes in his Theory of Affects (Houen, 2020, p.6), Pickering's actions contribute positively to her development.

In Act III, following the meeting at Mrs. Higgins's house, Pickering and Higgins stay there to discuss Eliza's progress. Pickering's feeling of hope regarding Eliza's development is noticeable, especially when Mrs. Higgins criticises Eliza's speech as inappropriate for a lady of the high social status he is moulding her to achieve, due to certain expressions she uses.[1] Pickering, however, remains with a sense of hope that such

[1] Mrs. Higgins shows her puzzlement addressing to her son in the following terms: "You silly boy, of course she's not presentable. She's a triumph of your art and of her dressmaker's; but if you suppose for a momento that she doesn't give herself away in every sentence she utters, you must be perfectly cracked about her" (*Pygmalion*, Act III, p. 63).

elements –what he refers to as 'sanguinary' expressions– can be deleted from her vocabulary.

Although Pickering maintains a refined behaviour to Higgins, in this instance, he feels forced to interrupt him after Mrs. Higgins criticises Higgins's conversational manners. Pickering intervenes, encouraging Higgins to focus on his self-reflection. Later, during the Ambassador's party, Pickering shows concern for Eliza, suggesting that they should keep an eye on her. His joy and wonder are noticeable when Eliza claims she has lost the bet, as Pickering encourages her with amazement, 'you have not lost it, my dear. You have won it ten times over' (*Pygmalion*, Act III, p. 72).

In Act V, Pickering and Higgins visit Mrs. Higgins to inform her about Eliza's disappearance. Pickering expresses a sense of guilt and shame, acknowledging that they may have been inconsiderate about Eliza's emotional needs. Mrs. Higgins statement that they never thanked or admired Eliza, prompts Pickering to reflect, 'Perhaps we were a little inconsiderate. Is she very angry?' (*Pygmalion*, Act V, p. 92), being aware of their failure to recognise Eliza's efforts, highlighting a moment of remorse and reflection.

When Eliza reappears, she engages in a conversation with Pickering, in which she expresses pride and joyfulness for the respect he has always shown for her. Therefore, the contrast between Pickering's polite treatment and Higgins's dismissive behaviour are clear. While Higgins often reduced Eliza to a mere subject of his linguistic experiment, Pickering treated her as a lady. This distinction is noticeable in Eliza's statement 'the difference between a lady and a flower girl is not how she behaves, but how she's treated' (*Pygmalion*, Act V, p. 95). Moreover, Pickering's formal address to Eliza, referring to her as 'Miss Doolittle' since their first meeting, highlights the respect he offers her.

Eliza's acknowledgement of Pickering's kindness generates a mutual sense of affection and joy. Her appreciation shows Pickering's response full of happiness, who is emotionally surprised and pleased by Eliza's praise.

Throughout the play, Baruch Spinoza's concept of the polarity between *joy* and *sadness* is represented in the contrasting behaviours and different emotional responses of Pickering and Higgins. On the one hand, Pickering approaches Eliza's education with encouragement, patience, and respect. His positive influence transforms Eliza's initial frustration at having to learn proper English into motivation, aligning with Spinoza's idea of how the experience of 'being affected' by others can alter one's emotional state (Houen, 2020, p. 67). Pickering's *joy* continues when Eliza succeeded at the party,

illustrating his hope in her capabilities despite the challenges posed by Higgins's aggressive actions and attitude. On the other hand, Higgins experiences a form of *sadness* towards the learning process of Eliza, as he does not have hope in the improvement of her speech. This sadness is sometimes mixed with a feeling of hate, as he frequently underestimates Eliza and reduces her accomplishments. Higgins's inability to emphasise or acknowledge Eliza's growth places him as emotionally stagnant, in contrast to Pickering's supportive and dynamic role.

2.2. Mrs. Higgins's concern for Eliza vs. her utter disapproval of her son's behaviour

Mrs. Higgins experiences concern and empathy for Eliza's well-being and future. She always supports her emotionally, and she even allows her to stay in her house after Eliza's confrontation with Higgins. Mrs. Higgins disapproves of her son's behaviour, criticising both his emotional detachment and his lack of consideration for Eliza's future.

In Act III, Mrs. Higgins expresses wonder at Eliza's rapid improvement in speech and manners. However, this admiration is strengthened by anger when Higgins asks whether Eliza is 'presentable' (*Pygmalion*, Act III, p. 63). Her response reveals both anger at Higgins's attitude and empathy for Eliza's challenges. On the one hand, she is angry with Higgins, as Eliza keeps using inappropriate vocabulary in her speech, recognising her slow progress in her transformation into a lady. On the other hand, she feels empathy for Eliza, acknowledging that avoiding such habits in her speech is difficult, especially under the instruction of someone as emotionally detached as Higgins.

Mrs. Higgins's empathy and compassion are intensified as she becomes more aware of Higgins's linguistic experiment. She criticises both Higgins and Pickering for their irresponsible approach, accusing them of treating Eliza like an object, as she states that they are 'a pretty pair of babies, playing with your live doll' (*Pygmalion*, Act III, p. 65), emphasising their immaturity and lack of care about her future. Mrs. Higgins also highlights the ethical implications of their bet, as they fail to consider the long-term consequences for Eliza once their experiment comes to an end.

In Act V, Mrs. Higgins's compassion is noticeable when she allows Eliza to stay in her house after her confrontation with Higgins after the Ambassador's party. Eliza arrives sad and full of anger and hate due to the treatment she received from Higgins, and Mrs. Higgins shows concern and care about Eliza. When Mrs. Higgins informs Higgins and Pickering that Eliza is upstairs, she seriously orders her son to behave respectfully if he wants Eliza to come down. This moment underscores Mrs. Higgins's ability to influence and control Higgins's behaviour, as he listens to her in a way he does not with others. Baruch Spinoza's main aspect of his Theory of Affects is noticeable in Mrs. Higgins actions, as they show how her behaviour can influence Higgins's initial mental state, highlighting Spinoza's idea that emotional states are subject to external influence.

Mrs. Higgins continues to support Eliza, recognising and defending that she is a person with affections, like anybody else. She tells Higgins and Pickering off for their

lack of sensitivity and emotional awareness of Eliza's efforts during her transformation, stating, 'I think I know pretty well what you did. The girl is naturally rather affectionate, I think. Isn't she, Mr. Doolittle?' (*Pygmalion,* Act V, p. 91). Her statement reinforces Eliza's humanity and emotional depth, which both men have failed to acknowledge. Higgins's lack of emotional intelligence does not justify his disregard for Eliza's feelings, and Mrs. Higgins insists on recognising her as a person with emotions. Her concern remains throughout the act, as she questions what has been said or done to Eliza, especially when Higgins falsely claims that he said nothing to upset her. This reflects Spinoza's idea that one's mental state can be shaped by other's actions (Houen, 2020, p.5), as Mrs. Higgins is aware that Eliza is also affectionate, and any mistreatment will affect her emotional state.

Mrs. Higgins's empathy is also noticeable when she criticises Higgins and Pickering for their lack of consideration toward Eliza, emphasising that they 'didn't thank her, or pet her, or admire her, or tell her how splendid she'd been' (*Pygmalion,* Act V, p. 92). This reaction aligns with Spinoza's philosophy (Houen, 2020, p.67), as Mrs. Higgins's emotional state is altered by the insensitive behaviour of Higgins and Pickering to Eliza.

Throughout this act, it is noticeable how Mrs. Higgins helps to resolve things, as she continues to support Eliza, offering her a place to stay and trying to control Higgins's behaviour. Moreover, she also shows anger to both Higgins and Pickering because they do not appreciate Eliza's transformation and the effort she has taken to learn proper English and refined manners. Thus, Mrs. Higgins's argument alters both men's emotional states, especially Pickering's one, as he shows shame, recognising what they have done wrongly. In her final intervention, Mrs. Higgins expresses a mixture of shame and sadness, telling her son, 'I'm afraid you've spoilt that girl, Henry. I should be uneasy about you and her if she were less fond of Colonel Pickering' (*Pygmalion,* Act V, p. 105). She acknowledges Eliza's affection for Pickering, who has treated her with kindness, considering that he may be a more suitable partner than Higgins. However, she is completely mistaken, as Higgins reveals that Eliza is planning to marry Freddy, a match that he is strongly against, as Eliza intends to share her life with a man that does not deserve her.

Throughout the play, Mrs. Higgins shows what Spinoza describes as *active affects*, which are the emotions that arise from one's own nature. She is not influenced by any

individual that can alter her emotions, offering her own perspective and maintaining her own emotions along the play.

Chapter 3

Passive Affects.

Freddy: A character whose emotional state is shaped by external forces

Although Freddy does not often appear in the play due to his role as a secondary character, his emotional responses –especially his admiration and affection for Eliza– are noticeable in the scenes in which he is present.

In Act III, during the meeting at Mrs. Higgins's home, Freddy reacts with joy and wonder to Eliza's speech, showing growing admiration to her. When Eliza replies to a question about the weather employing refined vocabulary, Freddy reacts with amusement, exclaiming, 'Ha! ha! How awfully funny!' (*Pygmalion*, Act III, p. 60). His laughter expresses his joyfulness when Eliza is speaking. This emotional engagement continues as Eliza tells about her father's struggles with alcohol. When she questions Freddy's laughter, he replies by saying, 'the new small talk. You do it so awfully well' (*Pygmalion*, Act III, p. 61). His comment reflects both his admiration and his desire to hear more about her, reinforcing his emotional attachment to Eliza. Later, when Eliza prepares to leave, Freddy offers to open the door for her, and it seems that he wants to accompany her if she goes home on foot. However, she interrupts him with the statement, 'Walk! Not bloody like. I am going in a taxi' (*Pygmalion*, Act III, p. 62). Despite this abrupt refusal, Freddy keeps watching her from the balcony, as she leaves, an action that further reveals his growing affection. Freddy also expresses desire and hope, which are both considered secondary emotions in Spinoza's Theory of Affects. These emotions are noticeable when Mrs. Higgins asks him whether he would like to see Eliza again, to which he replies with enthusiasm, 'Yes, I should, most awfully', highlighting his desire of meeting her again (*Pygmalion*, Act III, p. 63), showing a strong emotional response that aligns with his admiration for her.

Freddy's reactions relate to Baruch Spinoza's main idea on his Theory of Affects, in which emotional states are shaped by external forces. Freddy's emotional transformation is influenced and affected by Eliza's speech and presence, highlighting how his affections are passive in nature. According to Spinoza's classification of affects, he points out that *passive affects* are those that arise when an individual is influenced by external bodies. In this case, Eliza's behaviour alters Freddy's emotional state and perception of her.

In Act IV, Freddy's affection for Eliza is clearly demonstrated when he waits outside Higgins's house, staring at her bedroom window. As the lights go out, he whispers, 'Goodnight, darling, darling, darling' (*Pygmalion*, Act IV, p. 81), unaware that Eliza is going to appear. When Eliza sees him outside, she asks him what he is doing, and he replies, 'Nothing. I spend most of my nights here: It's the only place where I'm happy. Don't laugh at me, Miss Doolittle' (*Pygmalion*, Act IV, p. 81). This statement highlights not only Freddy's deep affection for Eliza but also the joyfulness that he experiences from just being near her. Freddy's emotional state aligns with Baruch Spinoza's distinction between *joy* and *sadness*. Freddy's happiness is linked to Eliza's presence, whereas her absence produces a sense of discomfort on him. Following this exchange, Freddy declares his love to Eliza, stating, 'You are the loveliest, dearest–', before losing control and starting kissing her. When questioned by a policeman, he replies, 'We've only just become engaged' (*Pygmalion*, Act IV, p. 82), emphasising his love and desire to establish a deep and serious relationship with Eliza.

The emotional polarity between *joy* and *sadness* described by Baruch Spinoza (Schaefer, 2019) is also reflected in the different treatment Eliza receives from Higgins and Freddy. Higgins treats her as a subject to her linguistic experiment, which leads to Eliza's feelings of *sadness* and anger. Freddy, in contrast, offers her respect, comfort and affection, contributing to her sense of joyfulness and emotional security. Therefore, his respectful behaviour contrasts with Higgins's aggressive and judgmental manners.

Eliza's reciprocal affection for Freddy becomes noticeable by the end of Act IV, when they leave Higgins's home together. This affection is strengthened when Freddy declares his love to Eliza while embracing and kissing each other. This strong emotional connection is further reinforced in Act V, when Eliza defends Freddy after Higgins criticises him by saying that he is a fool and she does not deserve such a man. She replies with agency and independence, 'Freddy's not a fool. And if he's weak and poor and wants me, may be he'd make me happier than my betters that bully me and don't want me' (*Pygmalion*, Act V, p. 102), reflecting mutual care over social status and intellectual superiority. This statement also shows the contrast between these two men, highlighting the polarity of *joy* and *sadness* discussed by Spinoza (Schaefer, 2019). Eliza associates Freddy with affection and joyfulness, whereas Higgins shows emotional detachment and mistreatment. Therefore, she prefers being with a man like Freddy, who produces comfort

and happiness in her rather than being with a man like Higgins, who only offers her sadness and dissatisfaction.

Chapter 4

Shifting affects.

Characters whose affects shift from active to passive and vice versa

This chapter will begin with an analysis of Professor Higgin's emotional states. Apart from experiencing pride and a sense of superiority due to his expertise in phonetics, he also shows lack of hope and shame regarding Eliza's potential. However, as Eliza progresses, Higgins experiences wonder at her rapid improvement, joy in her achievements, and brief moments of affection. At the Ambassador's party, he experiences again wonder at Eliza's statements full of confidence and dignity. In the final act, Higgins shows concern for Eliza's future, particularly disapproving of her interest in Freddy.

Then, Eliza's emotional journey will also be examined, including her initial hope and motivation when she begins with the lessons, contrasted by distress and sadness due to Higgins's harsh treatment. Her feelings toward Higgins shift from wonder to hate, and vice versa. She experiences shame about her transformation, as she several times wants to go back to her previous life as a flower girl. She also expresses pride and joy when her success is acknowledged, particularly at the Ambassador's party. By the end of the play, she experiences concern and anxiety about her future as well as a strong desire for independence.

Finally, Alfred Doolittle's emotions will be analysed, especially his cynicism and emotional detachment. He also experiences joyfulness with his lower-class status. This joyfulness shifts to anger and sadness when he unexpectedly inherits money, becoming a man with middle-class morality, however, he also expresses shame as he wants to return to his previous way of life.

4.1. Higgins's transition from Spinoza's active to passive affects

Higgins frequently adopts a paternalistic behaviour that highlights his dominant role in the play, especially in scenes where he is outside Covent Garden with other individuals, and during Eliza Doolittle's teaching and learning process. However, it is noticeable that this character, apart from lack of emotional intelligence in most cases, also experiences several kinds of affection throughout the play.

In the first act, Higgins's sense of dominance is disclosed through his intellectual pride and joy, as he demonstrates his specialist knowledge in phonetics to all the individuals waiting outside Covent Garden. He shows them his ability to identify the origin of bystanders by simply hearing their accents, being capable of distinguishing from which part of London they come from. Higgins's knowledge also creates a feeling of superiority of his character, which aligns with his sense of pride and joy. For instance, when Higgins interacts with the flower girl and other middle-class individuals, he was initially wrongly identified as a policeman, replying dismissively to the flower girl, stating 'Oh, shut up, shut up' (*Pygmalion*, Act I, 13), reinforcing his patronising attitude. Higgins's pride continues when the flower girl expresses curiosity about the symbols he has written in his notebook. Higgins replies rudely, 'I can' (*Pygmalion,* Act I, p. 14), asserting his phonetic skills. He also mocks and humiliates her due to her poor speech, emphasising his intellectual pride and self-confident dominance.

Higgins's sense of pride is intensified when he explains his profession to everyone waiting for the rain to stop outside Covent Garden. Mistaken for a policeman due to his note-taking, he causes alarm to the flower girl. He corrects the misunderstanding by stating that his profession is 'Simply phonetics. The science of speech' (*Pygmalion*, Act I, p.17). This moment highlights emotional contrast between Higgins and the flower girl, which is linked to Baruch Spinoza's exploration of *joy* and *sadness*. Higgins expresses satisfaction and joy in his work as a phonetician, as he emphasises in his statement, 'happy is the man who can make a living by his hobby' (*Pygmalion,* Act I, p. 17), His ability to determine individual's geographic origins based only in their speech fills him with pride. In contrast, the flower girl experiences sadness and despair, as she initially fears that Higgins could charge her for selling flowers. Her discomfort of worry is strengthened by Higgins's lack of respect and his harsh judgements of her speech, which deeply wound her.

Higgins bully attitude towards Eliza continues in Act II, when the flower girl, Eliza Doolittle, visits him to request English lessons. Rather than treating her with kindness, he mocks her pronunciation as well as her lower social status. His cruel comments alter Eliza's emotional state. For instance, when he asks Colonel Pickering, 'Shall we ask this baggage to sit down, or shall we throw her out of the window?' (*Pygmalion,* Act II, p. 26), Eliza attempts to defend herself, but her emotional distress is noticeable, as she begins to whimper. This is related to Spinoza's idea that other bodies can alter the mental

state of other individuals, as Higgins's cruel words alter Eliza's initial mental state. Later, after accepting the bet of transforming Eliza into a duchess, Higgins refers to her as a 'draggletailed guttersnipe' (*Pygmalion*, Act II, p. 29). Although Eliza tries to stand up for herself, Higgins maintains control through the persuasive force of his language. Moreover, Higgins's decision to burn Eliza's clothes in order to purchase her new ones reflects Spinoza's notion that an individual's actions can profoundly affect another's emotional state (Ahern, 2019, p.4). Higgins's linguistic power and social authority overshadow Eliza's attempts to resist by defending herself. Higgins's insults and coarse language, which severely wound Eliza emotionally, point out the potential violence of language and how emotions and someone's actions can affect others, especially Eliza in this case.

After Mrs. Pearce and Colonel Pickering advise Higgins to treat Eliza properly, his pride emerges again, as he asserts his ability to easily dominate others. While he acknowledges the need to behave more appropriately toward Eliza, he continues bullying her, saying that any money given to her would be spent on alcohol, considering that Eliza has no feelings that he may worry about. Due to his sense of pride, Higgins approaches Eliza with academic detachment, perceiving her not as an individual with feelings, but as a subject of his linguistic experiment.

The description of Higgins's lessons further emphasises his initial lack of hope in Eliza's potential. He expresses doubt about her ability to learn proper English or adopt good manners, as Eliza initially resists his instructions, refusing to answer Higgins's questions. It is also noticeable a sense of hate towards her, as he continues using dehumanising language, referring to her as 'this unfortunate animal' (*Pygmalion*, Act II, p. 51), and treating her as a mere experiment rather than as a person. This behaviour highlights Higgins's lack of empathy and emotional intelligence. Therefore, despite being the play's most intelligent character is, thus, its least learned, as he fails to respect the emotional lives of others.

This dynamics aligns with Baruch Spinoza's discussion of shame. Higgins seems to feel contempt for Eliza for her speaking what he perceives as a poor version of the English language, which could not be associated with the respected literary tradition of prominent writers such as Shakespeare and Milton. In Act II, this shame becomes particularly noticeable, as Higgins criticises Eliza's speech, which he views as an offense to the language spoken by relevant English writers like William Shakespeare and John

Milton. Through this, the play explores the power dynamics embedded in language, as upper-class characters –especially Higgins– claim to speak proper or correct English.

According to Spinoza's classification of affects, Higgins experiences *active affects,* as they arise from his own nature and his perception of the world and treatment of other individuals, rather than being influenced by others (Houen, 2020, p. 67). However, during the first lesson delivered to Eliza, a moment of wonder at her progress changes his initial lack of hope, as he is surprised of Eliza's speed of comprehending his explanations and learning English. Therefore, observing Eliza's aforementioned unexpected progress, he exclaims, 'By Jupiter, she's done it at first shot. Pickering: we shall make a duchess of her' (*Pygmalion*, Act II, p. 52). Despite this moment of wonder and acknowledgement, Higgins quickly returns to his usual bullying tone. This moment reflects Spinoza's idea of how one body can influence the emotional state of another, as Higgins's aggressive speech changes Eliza's initial desire and motivation to learn proper English into sadness, due to his threat to drag her by the hair if she continues speaking in her dialect, making her end up screaming.

In Act III, Higgins visits his mother's house in order to inform her about Eliza. This moment reflects the first time in which Higgins expresses genuine affection to others, in this case to his mother, symbolised by a kiss. As he starts telling his mother about Eliza, Mrs. Higgins considers that Eliza has caught Higgins's attention, prompting a response from Higgins defending himself. He asserts with pride that he is not interested in young women, idealising women like his mother and dismissing others as 'idiots'. This verbal exchange shows not only Higgins's pride but also his strongly misogynistic attitude.

Despite his usual detachment, Higgins presents a sense of pride and hope when speaking positively about Eliza. He emphasises her quick learning abilities and describes her as having a 'quick ear', expressing joyfulness with her progress. However, this admiration vanishes as soon as Eliza and the guests leave Mrs. Higgins home. Higgins asks his mother whether Eliza was 'presentable', eliciting a negative reply, as Eliza had employed some inappropriate vocabulary in her speech. Later on, Pickering states whether those 'sanguinary elements' in Eliza's speech could be deleted, to whom Mrs. Higgins replies, 'Not as long as she is Henry's hands' (*Pygmalion*, Act III, p. 64). This statement offends Higgins, prompting him to question whether his own language is improper. While he seems to feel wounded by such comment, it reinforces his lack of self-awareness and emotional capability.

Higgins objectifies Eliza by referring to her as merely 'useful' (*Pygmalion*, Act III, p. 65), emphasising her ability in managing his appointments, rather than recognising her as an individual. However, his conversation with his mother also shows his joy with and dedication to his profession, as he finds quite interesting the opportunity of transforming Eliza through language, viewing her as a linguistic experiment rather than as a person. Later, during the ambassador's party, another shift in Higgins's perception toward Eliza occurs. Since then, he no longer views Eliza as a burden and begins to recognise her as an independent woman. For instance, Higgins contemplates her with wonder, as she makes statements full of confidence and dignity in response to his insensitive behaviour.

In Act IV, after the ending of the bet, Higgins expresses joy as the bet is over, considering the entire process as tedious. This moment also illustrates how one individual's actions can influence another's emotional state, reflecting Baruch Spinoza's Theory of Affect. This can be seen in how Higgins's comments hurt Eliza's feelings, although her emotional response to him is going to be analysed in greater detail later. After Pickering left the room, Eliza starts arguing with Higgins due to those offensive words that had affected her. The argument increases until she ends up throwing his slippers to his face, being a symbolic act expressing her anger and distress. Higgins, wondered by Eliza's reaction, does not understand her sadness. Hence, Higgins's persistent lack of empathy and disregard to Eliza's future is evident.

Despite the tension**,** a moment of concern emerges when Eliza exclaims, 'Oh God! I wish I was dead' (*Pygmalion*, Act IV, p. 77), creating an emotional response from Higgins. He reacts with wonder and asks, 'Why? In heaven's name, why? Listen to me, Eliza. All this irritation is purely subjective' (*Pygmalion*, Act IV, p. 77). This moment is crucial, as a feeling of affection and concern for Eliza's well-being arises from Higgins for the first time on the entire play. Additionally, this act also shows another moment in which Higgins seems to be emotionally affected. This instance can be linked to Spinoza's theory that individuals can be impacted by others, as Higgins is wounded by Eliza's statement, questioning whether her clothes belong to Pickering in case he 'might want them for the next girl you pick up to experiment on' (*Pygmalion*, Act IV, p. 79). Her comment triggers Higgins's feelings of hurt and surprise, disrupting his emotional detachment and emphasising his vulnerability.

In Act V, Higgins's evolving emotions toward Eliza become evident. Throughout their interactions during Eliza's transformation, Higgins frequently experienced anger, frustration, and even hate, treating her as the subject of his linguistic experiment. His offensive comments often affected Eliza emotionally. However, in the final act of the play, Higgins experiences several emotions, as he shows concern about Eliza and her future. This emotional development from his lack of emotional intelligence to the emergence of some feelings can be analysed through Baruch Spinoza's Theory of Affects**,** particularly his distinction between *active* and *passive affects* (Houen, 2020, p. 67). In the first three acts, Higgins experiences *active affects*, as his actions and behaviours arise from his own nature. He constantly judges others based on their speech, using a bullying attitude in most cases. Nevertheless, in the last two acts, Higgins begins to experience *passive affects*, as his affections are influenced by external influences, especially Eliza's words and actions. For instance, when Eliza exclaims, 'Oh God! I wish I was dead' (*Pygmalion*, Act IV, p. 77), Higgins expresses concern and confusion, as he does not understand why she has said that, indicating a shift in his emotional response. Similarly, when Eliza argues with him about her clothes, as 'he might want them for the next girl you pick up to experiment on' (*Pygmalion*, Act IV, p. 79), Higgins seems hurt due to her statement. Hence, these moments mark a turning point, highlighting Higgins's gradual transformation into a man who can show emotional engagement for others, especially with Eliza.

By the final act, Higgins's initial disdain progressively transforms into a form of affection toward Eliza. This is noticeable when Higgins's concern about Eliza's location leads him to contact the police and go to his mother's house in order to tell her what happened. As soon as he discovers that Eliza is safe, he reacts with wonder, demonstrating that he cares about her, even though he does not want to recognise it. This emotional shift is further emphasised when he admits, 'I care for life, for humanity; and you are part of it that has come my way and been built into my house' (*Pygmalion*, Act V, p. 100). Although this statement suggests a deeper connection, he reinforces his unwillingness to engage in sentimental relationships or emotional exchanges, stating, 'I don't and won't trade in emotion' (*Pygmalion*, Act V, p. 100). Thus, Higgins maintains his emotional detachment, reinforcing his self-image as rational and independent, as he does not care about anyone and he does not want to establish any kind of relationship with anyone as well.

At the end of the play, after showing a feeling of affection toward Eliza, as he seems really concerned about losing her, he bullies her again, as he talks negatively about working-class people, underestimating Eliza's social background and future with Freddy. When Eliza asserts her independence by stating that she will work with the Hungarian –Higgins's enemy–, he reacts full of anger. However, this tense moment is followed by an instance of amazement when Higgins exclaims, 'By George, Eliza, I said I'd make a woman of you, and I have. I like you like this' (Pygmalion, Act V, p. 104), emphasising a feeling of pride and affection. Although he succeeded in transforming Eliza linguistically and socially, she chooses a future that defies Higgins's expectations. Her decision to marry Freddy undermines the former's objective to elevate her to a higher social position. This final instance points out not only the limits of Higgins's control but also the emotional attachment he has developed toward Eliza Doolittle.

4.2. Eliza Doolittle's transition from Spinoza's passive to active affects

Eliza Doolittle initially experiences hope and motivation when she begins her lessons with Mr. Higgins in order to learn proper English. However, these aspirations are challenged by Higgins's harsh judgements, causing emotional distress and breakdown moments in Eliza. By the end of the play, Eliza's development as a character is noticeable, becoming a confident and independent woman, capable of defending herself regardless others' opinions. She also experiences emotions such as wonder, hate toward Higgins, and at times, shame, as she sometimes reflects on her previous life as a flower girl. This feeling of shame is influenced by Higgins's statements, highlighting the influence of Baruch Spinoza's Theory of Affects, which mainly focuses on how one body can affect the emotional state of another.

In the first act, Eliza, who is referred to as the flower girl, experiences a sense of pride, as she defends herself against Higgins's judgements about her accent and manner of speech. Despite all the aforementioned judgements, she feels joy in her way of speaking because it determines her identity. However, when Eliza and the bystanders start to think that Higgins might be a policeman –due to his note-taking–, her emotional state begins to shift. Higgins's statements showing superiority continue to affect Eliza, which connects with Spinoza's idea that external words and actions can alter another person's emotional condition. This is evident when Eliza states, 'he's no right to take away my character. My character is the same to me as any lady's' (*Pygmalion*, Act I, p. 16), insisting on her rights despite her lower social status. Moreover, Eliza's curiosity and feeling of wonder are noticeable when she is aware of the rare symbols Higgins writes in his notebook. However, when Higgins explains that he is a professor of phonetics, capable of identifying where people come from by their speech, Eliza's previous feeling of wonder changes to a sense of shame. This emotional shift is noticeable when she refers to Higgins as an 'unmanly coward' (*Pygmalion,* Act I, p. 17), expressing her disapproval, not only due to his lack of emotional intelligence but also due to the lack of importance of his profession.

In Act II, Eliza Doolittle's emotional experiences of hope and hate are intertwined when she begins her lessons with Higgins. Her initial motivation and joy are noticeable when she visits his home with the intention of starting learning proper English. However, this hope is challenged by Higgins's arrogant behaviour, as he is continually treating Eliza

like an object, judging and bullying her. This would lead to feelings of hate and despair, and even shame. For instance, Eliza's increasing feelings of shame are noticeable when she states, 'I'm going away. He's off his chump, he is. I don't want no balmies teaching me' (*Pygmalion,* Act II, p. 31), regretting having gone to Higgins's home in order to ask whether he could teach her proper English. His verbal aggressive behaviour causes Eliza to end up crying, reinforcing Baruch Spinoza's notion that external bodies can significantly alter a person's emotional state. Later on, Higgins accuses Eliza of lacking emotions and suggesting she would waste money on alcohol if someone gave her money. Eliza replies with a sense of wonder and pride, asserting, 'I got my feelings same as anyone else' (*Pygmalion,* Act II, p. 32). This statement shows Eliza's emotional depth and her awareness in contrast to Higgins's emotional detachment and narcissism. Her growing remorse is noticeable when she states, 'If I'd known what I was letting myself in for, I wouldn't have come here' (*Pygmalion,* Act II, p. 35), reflecting her regret about taking the lessons. Eliza's emotional complexity is reinforced in her interactions with her father, who visits Higgins not only to see his daughter but also to ask for money. She claims that 'All he come here for was to touch you for some money to get drunk on', emphasising her feelings of betrayal and hate toward a father more interested in personal gain than in her daughter, considering the option of selling his daughter to Higgins.

By Act III, Eliza's transformation in her pronunciation and manners becomes really noticeable, especially when compared to her previous depiction as a flower girl who speaks with a heavy accent. She now shows refine manners and articulate speech, demonstrating the success of Higgins's phonetic lessons. Eliza's evolution exemplifies Spinoza's Theory of Affects (2020), emphasising how consistent interaction and instruction can reshape one's mental and emotional state. This development is noticeable during her visit to Mrs. Higgins's household, where her new appearance surprises the guests. When Eliza explains, 'My aunt died of influenza: so they said' (*Pygmalion,* Act III, p. 60), her comment produces a feeling of wonder in Mrs. Eynsford Hill, emphasising not only how Eliza's speech has still features of her background, but also Spinoza's idea of how the statement of other bodies can influence the perceptions of others (2019).

At the Ambassador's party, Eliza's feelings of wonder and pride increase. Her success is recognised when one guest compares her speech to that of Queen Victoria. This external support produces a sense of joy in Eliza, apart from her previous feeling of amazement, showing her evolution into a confident and independent woman. Through

her personal growth, Eliza demonstrates that she no longer needs to rely in Higgins, as she is capable of making strong statements with a good pronunciation and appropriate manners.

In Act IV, Eliza's previous emotions of pride and wonder disappear, giving way to anxiety and concern about her future, as the bet is over. These feelings grow due to the strong argument with Higgins when they return from the Ambassador's party. Eliza's feelings of anger, frustration, and hate towards Higgins emerge again after he exclaims, 'Thank God it's over!' (*Pygmalion,* Act IV, p. 74), stating that those months of effort were just a mere experiment. Eliza is affected by his response to the bet and his indifference. However, she replies full of anger and hate. Being incapable of containing her aggressive feelings, Eliza ends up throwing Higgins's slippers to his face with strength (*Pygmalion*, Act IV, p. 76). This action reflects Baruch Spinoza's idea of the relationship between the mind and the body (Houen, 2020, p. 5), as Eliza's anger and hate intertwine with her subsequent action of throwing his slippers at him.

In this scene, the polarity between *joy* and *sadness* also appears, which is a crucial aspect in Spinoza's Affect Theory (Schaefer, 2019, p. 9). Higgins experiences *joy* and desire, as he is looking forward to winning the bet, whereas Eliza reflects *sadness* and frustration. Higgins's offensive comments –arguing that all the learning process was a complete waste of time– alter Eliza's mental state. This is another instance of how one individual can affect another, as Spinoza states. Unable to contain her *sadness*, Eliza ends up screaming in frustration, expressing her shame by saying, 'I wish you'd left me where you found me' (*Pygmalion,* Act IV, p. 78). This wish emphasises Eliza's internal conflict and a desire to return to her simpler life as a flower girl, regretting all her learning process and transformation into a lady.

In Act V, Eliza evidences significant growth as a character, evolving from a flower girl to an independent lady, capable of speaking proper English. At the beginning of this act, Eliza expresses pride and *joy* inspired by Pickering, whose respectful and encouraging behaviour fostered her motivation and self-awareness to learn proper English. Unlike Higgins, whose bullying manners caused her *sadness,* Pickering treated her with dignity, reinforcing her desire for her own transformation. Baruch Spinoza's idea of the polarity between *joy* and *sadness* is noticeable in Eliza's contrasting emotional responses to Higgins and Pickering. Eliza expresses the result of Pickering's treatment by stating, 'the difference between a lady and a flower girl is not how she behaves, but

how she's treated' (*Pygmalion,* Act V, p. 95). This statement emphasises her understanding that belonging to the upper social classes implies not only knowing how to behave elegantly but also being perceived and treated as if you belonged to those upper classes by others. While Higgins focused on phonetic instruction, it was Pickering who taught her the correct behaviour and self-respect associated with being a lady.

When Eliza is alone with Higgins, they discuss what will happen now that he has no other individual to teach. Higgins suggests that he might listen to the recordings of her speech progress. Eliza replies by emphasising Higgins's emotional detachment, stating that he is incapable of hurting others because he lacks emotional intelligence. Thus, if he just heard the recordings, he would not hurt anyone. This also highlights Eliza's growing awareness of his inability to empathise with anyone or have deeper emotional connections.

Eliza's feeling of amazement emerges when Higgins admits that he took the bet just for amusement, without considering its impact on Eliza's future. This is noticeable when she questions, 'And you may throw me out tomorrow if I don't do everything you want to?' (*Pygmalion*, Act V, p. 99). Eliza feels trapped between the influence of Higgins, her father, and the possibility of marrying Freddy. However, her desire to obtain independence is evident, resisting the idea that her future must be determined by a man of some sort. Eliza's statement 'you're not my teacher now' (*Pygmalion*, Act V, p. 102) marks a moment of agency, as she expresses her pride in her personal growth by rejecting Higgins because she is tired of his constantly correcting her speech. This moment is also aligned by feelings of hope, when she claims that she wants a little kindness and affection, which she explains as the reason why she returned in order to express care for Higgins. Nevertheless, he remains emotionally detached and dismissive. Spinoza's Affect Theory becomes relevant here, when Higgins insults her by calling her a fool, shifting Eliza's emotional state from *joy* to *sadness*, highlighting Spinoza's concept of affective polarity between these two emotions (Schaefer, 2019, p. 9). Moreover, it is also noticeable how Eliza's emotional state is influenced by Higgins's comments, thus, aligning with Spinoza's idea of how other bodies might alter the mental state of others (Ahern, 2019, p. 4). Eliza's response in tears, 'that's not a proper answer to give me', (*Pygmalion*, Act V, p. 103), reinforces the emotional impact of Higgins's words and how his actions influence her initial mental state.

As Higgins continues bullying her, underestimating the life of working-class individuals, Eliza replies full of agency. For the first time, she answers him back expressing her own thoughts openly, calling him a 'cruel tyrant' and a 'bully' (*Pygmalion*, Act V, p. 103). Although she experiences shame, as she had thought of returning with her father, she realises that she cannot go back to her previous life. Now, as Eliza has been transformed into a lady, she decides to marry Freddy and support him by her own means, rejecting dependence and accepting a new sense of autonomy. Eliza's emotional state reflects a mixture of remorse for the simplicity of her former life, and wonder, as she expresses her joy for and satisfaction with her learning process and transformation into a lady.

By the end of the play, Eliza's character shows the constraints imposed by oppressive and unrealistic ideals of femininity. She has been coached, disciplined, and taught to perform an identity that is different from who she really is. This leads to her feelings of repentance and emotional complexity, as she recognises her progressive transformation from the flower girl she was at the beginning of the play. It is also noticeable that Eliza has adopted aspects of Higgins's way of perceiving the world, especially his emotional detachment. As soon as Eliza obtains her independence, she expresses her disregard for him, stating that she no longer cares about Higgins. Thus, in line with Spinoza's Affect Theory, Higgins's behaviour along the play has influenced Eliza's own affective responses. Therefore, Eliza ends up adopting the lack of emotional intelligence –which characterises Higgins– against him.

4.3. Alfred Doolittle's progressive transition from active to passive affects

Throughout *Pygmalion*, Alfred Doolittle, Eliza's father, experiences several emotions, including cynicism, joy, and sadness. His attitude toward Eliza is marked by emotional detachment, as he prioritises his personal gain over his concern as a father for his daughter. He also shows feelings of joy and sadness throughout the play, especially in Act IV, when Alfred visits Higgins to inform him of his unexpected inheritance. While he expresses a sense of joy due to the wealth that he has acquired, he also shows feelings of sadness and shame, as he wants to return to his previous life because he does not want to have middle-class morality.

In Act II, Doolittle's cynicism is noticeable when he arrives at Higgins's house to reclaim his daughter. At first, he states that he wants to see his Eliza to give her the luggage, however, his true intention is to request some money from Higgins. His character is introduced through a stage direction that highlights his profession as a dustman as well as a man with feelings, as he 'has a remarkably expressive voice, the result of a habit of giving vent to his feelings without reserve' (*Pygmalion*, Act II, p. 41). At the beginning, he reflects concern and care for Eliza, but as long as the conversation with Higgins and Pickering evolves, his behaviour changes. He proposes to sell Eliza to Higgins for fifty pounds, showing an utter lack of emotional intelligence and responsibility as a father. This behaviour can be analysed through Baruch Spinoza's Theory of Affects, especially his distinction between *active affects* –affects that emerge in an individual's own nature –, and *passive affects* –affects influenced by external forces, altering the body– (Houen, 2020, p. 67). Doolittle is an example of a man with *active affects,* as his actions and emotions arise from his own nature rather than from being influenced by other individuals.

Later on in this act, Doolittle describes himself as an 'underserving poor' man, expressing both his *sadness* due to his social status, and a contradictory sense of *joy*, as he prefers being an undeserving man rather than a man with middle-class morality. This duality of emotions reflects Spinoza's distinction between *joy* and *sadness*. Doolittle's internal conflict is also noticeable when he states 'I want a bit of amusement, cause I'm a thinking man. I want cheerfulness and a song and a band when I feel low' (*Pygmalion*, Act II, p. 46). Although he comes from a lower social class, he claims his right to

experience *joyfulness* and entertainment in his life, thus, questioning societal beliefs about who is entitled to such emotions.

When Eliza returns to the room in her transformed appearance, Doolittle reacts with wonder and pride, initially failing to recognise her. However, his lack of emotional intelligence is noticeable again when Eliza explains that the purpose of her father's visit was only to request for money. This reinforces that Doolittle is emotionally detached, as he prioritises alcohol over his parental relationship with his daughter.

In Act III, Eliza reveals her father's dependence on alcohol when she is at Mrs. Higgins's house talking with the guests. She describes it as a 'chronic' state, emphasising that he would not return home 'until he's drunk himself cheerful and loving-like' (*Pygmalion*, Act III, p. 61). This reflects Alfred Doolittle's feeling of joy through alcohol, a form of escapism that aligns with Baruch Spinoza's distinction between *joy* and *sadness*: on the one hand, Doolittle expresses *joyfulness* through his dependence to alcohol; on the other hand, he also experiences *sadness* due to his awareness of her lower-class status and his conflicting desire to become a man with middle-class morality.

By the final act, Doolittle's social position has undergone an unexpected transformation, as he inherited a huge amount of money from a wealthy relative of Higgins. Therefore, he becomes part of the middle-class, solving his previous financial problems. This new status imposes, on him, the 'middle-class morality' he had rejected along the play, as he was happy with his life as a drunkard with little money. Doolittle is angry, as he blames Higgins for this unwanted change stating that he, 'Ruined me. Destroyed my happiness. Tied me up and delivered me into the hands of middle-class morality' (*Pygmalion,* Act V, p. 88), claiming that he lost his previous joyfulness as a lower-class man. This shift aligns with Baruch Spinoza's idea of how external actions – such as Higgins's recommendation for Mr. Doolittle's inheritance of the former's relative– can alter Doolittle's emotional and social state. Alfred Doolittle's demand for better treatment from Higgins, as reflected in his statement, 'Now, now, Enry Iggins! Have some consideration for my feelings as a middle-class man' (*Pygmalion,* Act V, p. 92), emphasises his wonder about his new identity as a man with middle-class morality.

Spinoza's polarity between *joy* and *sadness* is also noticeable when Eliza asks her father whether she should forgive Higgins for his aggressive behaviour to her throughout the transformation process. Doolittle not only replies with a sense of *sadness,* as he feels regretful about the way Higgins and Pickering have behaved toward Eliza, but he also

replies with a sense of *joy*, as he realises how they have helped Eliza to improve her manners and speech. He congratulates Colonel Pickering's respectful behaviour, recognising the effort of both men in Eliza's transformation.

Moreover, the lack of emotional intelligence shared by Higgins and Doolittle is noticeable in a conversation between Eliza and Higgins, as Higgins claims, 'I treat a duchess as if she was a flower girl', to which Eliza replies, 'Like father' (*Pygmalion*, Act III, p. 99). This exchange emphasises the emotional detachment of both characters. Despite their different social backgrounds, they constantly disregard Eliza's humanity without recognising her as a person with emotions and dignity.

Conclusions

This dissertation applies Baruch Spinoza's Theory of Affects to the emotional development of several characters in *Pygmalion*. The structure of each chapter reflects Spinoza's typologies of affects. Chapter one offers a theoretical overview of affect theory, highlighting some prominent historians and philosophers that contributed to the development of this theory.

In chapter two, I focus on *active affects* –those arising from an individual's own nature– demonstrated through the characters of Colonel Pickering and Mrs. Higgins. Their emotions are not shaped by external forces but they influence others instead, as seen in Mrs. Higgins's disapproval of her son's treatment of Eliza, which forces him to adopt a more respectful behaviour. Chapter three addresses *passive affects* –those in which external influences alter the body– illustrated in Freddy's character, whose emotional responses are shaped by external forces, particularly his affections for Eliza.

The final chapter explores how both types of affects coexist within several characters. Higgins and Alfred Doolittle initially show active affects that arise from their self-interest and lack of emotional intelligence. However, as the narrative progresses, they become influenced by others, shifting toward passive affects. In contrast, Eliza experiences the opposite transformation, as she starts the play with passive affects, influenced by Higgins's control, but progressively developing emotional independence and agency. By the end of the play, she expresses active affects, as she takes control of her own life, while imagining a future with Freddy based on her personal choices and independence.

This analysis has helped me understand how people's emotions can be influenced by their interactions with others. It also encourages and inspires me for potential future research, as Spinoza's perspective on Affect Theory –along with other relevant ideas from the philosophers and historians discussed in the first chapter– could lead me to analyse other literary works from the point of view of emotions.

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