LIBERAL JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE REVIEW
An International Double-Blind Peer-Reviewed Open Access Journal
ISSN (Online): 3006-3175 | ISSN (Print): 3006-3167
Volume 5, Issue 8 October,

WHEN THE BODY SPEAKS DIFFERENTLY: ACTION–DIALOGUE DISJUNCTION IN GEORGE BERNARD SHAW'S PYGMALION

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DOI: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.23660654

Keywords
George Bernard Shaw; Pygmalion; action–dialogue disjunction; physical action; dramatic dialogue; stage directions; characterization

Article History
Received: *25 June 2026*
Accepted: *16 September 2026*
Published: *26 October 2026*

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Abstract

This paper looks at the link between physical action and verbal conversation in George Bernard Shaw's Pygmalion, specifically at the instances in which the physical is not equivalent to the verbal. The study examines the selected texts of a 5-act play using qualitative textual analysis to explore the physical action and interactions of gestures, position, movement, facial expression and other actions with dialogue. The action–dialogue disjunction is defined with four categories: contradiction, qualification, intensification and revelation. The analysis demonstrates that physical actions are not simply used to accompany or illustrate verbal communication, but can oppose the apparent meaning of the verbal communication, alter the interpretation of the verbal communication, reinforce the emotional and/or interpersonal meaning of the verbal communication, and communicate attitudes and/or intentions that are not expressed verbally. The disjunctions are especially important in the evolution of Eliza Doolittle and her interactions with Henry Higgins and the other characters, as physical action often reveals conflicts of identity, independence, power, and interpersonal interactions. Finally, the study shows that by focusing on the dialogue and physical action, characterization and the drama's meaning can be explored in a more detailed and nuanced way in Pygmalion. The study proposes a coherent analytical framework for examining the verbal–embodied disjunction in dramatic texts by considering dialogue and related physical action as a single unit.

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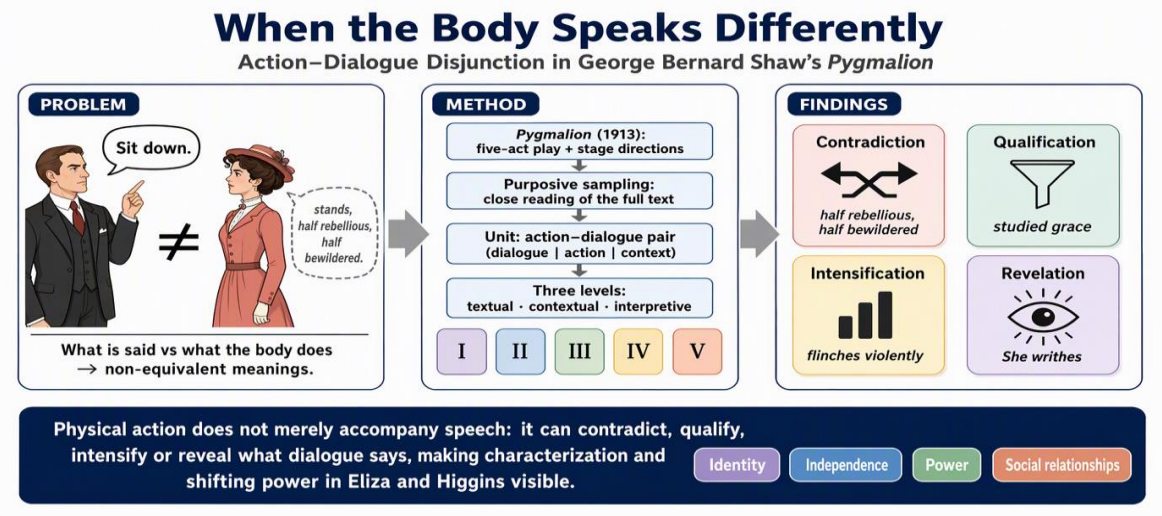

INTRODUCTION

Drama can create meaning in more ways than just with words. Dialogue conveys the meaning of what the character says, what he/she thinks, what he/she wants to say, and what he/she feels about what is happening. Movement, gesture, posture, facial reaction, spatial positioning and stage directions can add meaning to the meaning of the dialogue. Verbal and physical resources can complement and amplify each other in dramatic text, or they can offer conflict between what the character says and what the character does. This relationship is significant as sometimes physical action may express an emotion, intention or attitude which is not specifically expressed in dialogue.

This relationship is seen especially well in George Bernard Shaw's play Pygmalion. Shaw was an Irish playwright, critic, and social commentator, whose plays often explored the issues of language, social class, gender, identity and social conventions. Pygmalion was first performed in 1913, focusing on Eliza Doolittle, a working class flower-seller who becomes transformed by the training of Professor of phonetics Henry Higgins in her speech and behaviour. Language and social identity are thus starred as the protagonists of the play, while the stage directions offer specific cues to movement, expression, posture and behaviour (Shaw, 1913/1916).

Eliza's change isn't just expressed in speech. Her changing manner, physical reactions, movements and interactions with Higgins and other characters also play a role in the development of her identity that she is presenting. Higgins also conveys his ideas by his actions as well as his words, and his actions can sometimes make his statements more complicated or more tense. Linguistic and structural analyses of the play have been discussed in the past, which has revealed how dialogue structures interaction and social relations in the play (Abbas & Awan, 2017; Nalliveettil, 2020). Other research has focused on character, class, and identity which have shown the significance of social and interpersonal relationships in the play (Anbar et al., 2022; Fatima et al., 2025).

Pygmalion has also proved to be a multimodal phenomenon that can only be understood in relation to other modalities. For instance, He and Cao (2022) analyse verbal and non-verbal resources in the play and highlight the postures, gestures and paralanguage. This kind of work puts embodied behaviour into

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dramatic meaning. The present study, however, takes the more specific perspective of moments when the action and spoken dialogue do not necessarily convey the same meaning.

In this research, the action–dialogue disjunction of Pygmalion is therefore analyzed. In the present context, it means moments when the physical action of the character is in some way inconsistent with the apparent meaning of the dialogue, qualifies or modifies the apparent meaning, intensifies an emotional or interpersonal meaning, or reveals an intention, emotion, attitude, or relationship that is not apparent in the dialogue. Dialogue and related physical action is therefore a single analytical unit, as opposed to stage directions being viewed as additional performance directions, in the study.

This focus is important because it is this type of moment that can complicate characterization and/or dramatic interaction. A character may express resistance but say, "Everything is fine," or may say, "Oh, everything is fine," and mean it, but have an uncertain tone in their voice, or maybe use a normal word, but his/her body is showing tension. In Pygmalion, where language is intrinsically linked to class, identity, power and transformation, such differences between speech and action can offer further clues to the understanding of how characters react to each other. An examination of power relationships in play contributes further to the argument of the importance of looking at play as a space in which character relationships are built and negotiated (Neuman & Cohen, 2024).

Therefore, this paper has first identifed and then interpret a number of cases of action–dialogue disjunction in the five acts of Pygmalion. It summarizes such occurrences in four categories: contradiction, qualification, intensification, and revelation, and investigates the function of each in character development and interpersonal relationships, as well as in the impact of drama. The intention is not to say that non-verbal behaviour or stage directions have previously been neglected, but to provide a more specific examination of the consequences of the fact that action and dialogue may no longer be equivalent.

There are three questions that guide the study: How does physical action relate to spoken dialogue in George Bernard Shaw's Pygmalion? What are the different types of action/dialogue disjunction in the play? And how does action/dialogue disjunction enhance characterisation and the development of the play's meaning?

Accordingly, the study has four objectives: first; to point out situations in which physical action and verbal speech do not convey identical meanings in Pygmalion, second; to describe the key types of action–dialogue disjunction in the play, third; to explore how physical actions conflict, modify, amplify, and/or contribute to verbal dialogue's meaning, and fourth; to analyze the role of action–dialogue disjunction in characterization, interpersonal relations, and plot in the play.

The contribution of this paper is threefold. It formalizes action–dialogue disjunction as a focused analytical concept; it provides a four-category framework (contradiction, qualification, intensification, and revelation) applied to action–dialogue pairs through a consistent three-level procedure; and it demonstrates, through analysis of the five acts of Pygmalion, that disjunction operates as a recurring mechanism of characterization, identity, and shifting interpersonal power. The framework is transferable to other dramatic texts, offering a replicable way to examine the relationship between what characters say and what their bodies do.

However, the paper has five major sections. After this introduction, Section 2 summarizes the existing scholarship on Pygmalion, dialogue, multimodality, stage directions, characterization, power, identity and more. The theoretical orientation and qualitative textual methodology in identifying and analysing action–dialogue disjunction in Section 3 is explained. The textual analysis of selected instances is provided as Section 4 and the major findings and their implications are discussed in Section 5. The paper ends with a summary of the contribution of the study and its significance for interpreting the meaning of the drama.

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Literature Review

Vibeke Nordberg and Michelle Dierdreese both note that Pygmalion employs a powerful language that immediately signals the importance of language in concept building social identities.Vibeke Nordberg and Michelle Dierdreese both start their research on Pygmalion from a profound insight into making language central to the building of social identities. This is discussed by Abbas and Awan (2017) who draw on a model that takes a structural-functional approach to the organization of dramatic exchanges, revealing how interactional patterns contribute to Eliza's journey of going from submission to assertion. The dialogue is studied not as a string of disconnected lines but as a form of organized social activity which is very useful for their study. Its analytical categories are, however, in verbal interaction. This orientation provides a needed starting point for the current research: without understanding the function of dialogue in the interaction, it cannot be reviewed in comparison with the bodily behaviour. The issue here is that the physical reactions that occur in these exchanges are not necessarily taught as a means for producing meaning, nor are they systematically recorded as potential sources of meaning.

In the same way, Nalliveettil (2020) examines Pygmalion linguistically and and foregrounds the communicative importance of Shaw's use of language. The study shows that the dialogue can be analyzed not only semantically and syntactically, but also in its communicative function, which is to explain the significance and meaning of linguistic phenomena.The study confirms the need for close text analysis, showing that the dialogue can be analyzed at a linguistic form level and a communicative effectiveness level. However, it focuses on language and physical action is not part of its core framework of analysis. This limitation is relevant in the case of a dramatic statement, for which a gesture or movement, or facial expression with a different pragmatic meaning, might be provided. The aim of the present research, therefore, is to extend Nalliveettil's study to find out what is visible when the verbal dimension of the play is juxtaposed with the embodied action.

Directing to the linguistic aspects, Paramartha (2021) discusses substitution as a cohesive device in dialog of Pygmalion. The study is valuable in that it illuminates how seemingly fine language decisions make for text continuity and interactional coherence. However coagulation is a phenomenon within the verbal channel and dramatic communication may have more to do than lexical and grammatical relations. A character can be "talking" and at the same time develop a physical reaction to something happening that disrupts or makes an interaction more complex. So, the methodologically precise linguistic approach developed by Paramartha suggests a methodological inspiration for the close textual coding while in this case the methodologically precise approach has been extended to the relation of dialogue to physical behaviour.

He and Cao (2022) go beyond linguistic analysis; one most close comparison with He and Cao (2022) was taken by a multimodal discourse analysis between characters in Pygmalion. Their approach is noteworthy for acknowledging the necessity of a dramatic interaction involving verbal and visual resources, and also because they acknowledge that a non-verbal element may be used to contribute to a socially appropriate interaction and to provide meaning in one's interpersonal relations and to characterize. Thus this work shows that the play's examination can be legitimate more than just from dialogue and that is what we will see. The broad multimodal perspective, however, doesn't create a distinct category of cases where there's a difference between verbal and physical meaning. Accordingly the present study only explores aspect of the NEW as moments in which action and dialogue do not correspond.

Class and character change is another key area of Pygmalion scholarship. Anbar et al. (2022) deconstruct the character of Eliza as a symbol of class strife, focusing on her metamorphosis and relations to social hierarchy and unequal opportunities. The research supports the notion of Eliza's development as a social process instead of just a personal process. It, however, emphasizes a theme without making a consistent

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distinction between Eliza's words and her actual action toward others. These differences are important because, class changes can be conveyed by embodied behaviour, as well as by speech. Changing language can provide an indication of social mobility, but at the same time posture, gesture, movement and reaction might suggest the emotional opportunities or highs and lows of such a shift.

Yet Saeed et al., (2022) continue the ideological interpretation of Shaw's play by exploring his Fabianist and Feminist aesthetics. Their analysis illustrates how Pygmalion interacts with notions of social reform, gender relations and the structures of identity for each individual. This is a valuable way to ascribe wider meanings to character interactions. But, physical action is not being developed as a formal analytical category that can confront and alter dialogue. This work is not a substitute for readings of the play on a level of interpretation that involve ideas or ideology but instead brings another level of text on which the ideological is made visible in the mismatch between the words they say and what they do.

In the same way, Alexeyev (2023) investigates the phenomenon of Pygmalion as interdiscursivity and incorporates the analysis with the help of the linguistic, pragmatic, sociolinguistic and critical perspectives. This study is important because it shows that the interpretation of the words characters speak can be made outside of their individual utterances, thus outside the dialogue. In that regard, it can be used for a contextual reading of a dialogue. However, the level of the discourse is not sufficient to fully account for cases in which the meaning of the situation is not conveyed in the verbal discourse. In the present study the situational awareness of discourse analysis is therefore combined with a more tightly bounded aspect of the verbal–embodied comparison.

Pratheeba and Neelakandan (2023) explore the possibility of intonation instruction using Pygmalion, highlighting aspects of pronunciation, speech delivery and emotional aspects of the voice. Their work is relevant since the meaning of dialogue is influenced by its performance. However, although intonation research has traditionally been conducted in a primarily auditory manner, the present research is focused on a sensory expression of physical action. The difference is pertinent: Both studies point out that written dialogue is certainly not exactly the equivalent of live performance, but the present research provides an account of how other expressions of the body, like movement, posture, facial response, bodily reaction, can impact and deepen the meaning of spoken dialogue.

Further Pellatt (2023) provides an especially important methodological foundation for thinking of stage directions as important textual material not instructions for performance. The study emphasises psycholinguistic and soci-historical features that may be identified in the directions and, by so doing, draws attention to the physical behavior as essentially meaning part of the play text. However, it's not the systematic comparison of stage directions to dialogue, found in Pygmalion. This insight is further developed in the present study by assigning each physical act in context to the dialogue related to it, and then by asking whether the action confirms, modifies, heightens or reveals a different meaning to the dialogue.

Another way in which this research comes to English is by using the power focus, which will be treated separately in this course. Using computational techniques and the AI model GPT-4, Neuman and Cohen (2024) analyze for dominance and compliance in communications, and test the analysis on the Pygmalion film as an illustration. They have methodologically important work because their methods are used to trace out the patterns of interaction in a mechanical and recurring fashion, rather than merely impressionistically. However, the analysis is centred on conversational utterances and power relations. Physical responses are not the major data. Bodily action as an aid in the interpretation of dominance, resistance, surrender, uncertainty or shifting inter-personal authority is subject to the present qualitative study.

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Alexeyev and Driai (2024) then, following in Pygmalion's steps, analyze this poetry's pedagogical dimension, focusing on the cultural and socio-historical context that affects statement and identity. They have a Foucauldian sensibility reinforced by the awareness that language is part of social institutions and systems of knowledge. This view is important in the context of the current research because physical behaviour does take place in those same social relations as well. The study, however, is still discourse oriented, with a pedagogical meaning. The present research extends from the macroborder of social organisation to the microlevel of the relationship between a character's enunciation and his/her done body, his/her body turned against his/her own enunciation and thus his own body, and his/her body qualified by his/her enunciation.

Recent work still continues to focus on the role of language as a device of mobilizing identities and classes. Using Communication Accommodation Theory, the speech development of Eliza is analysed by Fatima et al. (2025) as a relationship between convergence and divergence and social identity and relationship changes. Their analysis reiterates the notion that the process of linguistic adaptation is critical in shaping Eliza's change. However, linguistic accommodation does not guarantee for full behavioural accommodation. A character can change the mode of speech without changing physical cues of uncertainty, resistance, discomfort, or emotional distance. The present study thus poses the question of identity beyond speech style by asking if a congruence or discongruence exists between the physical action and the identity conveyed in the dialogue.

Similarly, Naz et al. (2025) explore Pygmalion in the light of Critical Discourse Analysis of selected dialogues of the play to discuss the topic of linguistic control, power and mobility of classes. They question the role of speaking as a place of social conflict and situate Eliza as an agent of the reconstruction of her identity. The study focuses on aspects of selected verbal exchanges however the conclusions which are drawn have a major reliance on the linguistic evidence. There is simultaneously the question as to whether the physical action reflects the attitude words express: when Eliza or another character is either submissive, confident, abashed, or accepts, does the physical motion mimic that attitude or be contradictory? This is the question that takes us right towards the action–dialogue framework which is the focus of the present study.

Similarly, in the analysis of transformation and identity in Shaw's selected plays, Salah et al. (2025) provide a general knowledge of the ways in which characters come to negotiate changes in social and personal identity. They're focused on change, especially relevant to Pygmalion, as two of the effects Eliza experiences are the changes in her speech and in the way she presents herself socially and interacts with others. Nonetheless, this transformation is not looked upon as a series of verbal-embodied disjunctions, but at instead as a thematic and characterological process. This study provides another perspective, since it suggests ways in which a given instance of physical conduct releases transformation in the here and now of the represented situation.

A recent Foucauldian analysis of Pygmalion by Sooria (2025) also views the play in terms of power, discipline, normalization and Higgins' and Eliza's relationship. This is useful for understanding how social and linguistic knowledge and power that shape identity. A macro-level account of power does not fully convey the implication of its micro-signals in negotiating it moment by moment. A change in interpersonal positioning may appear physically in a character's hesitation, withdrawal, turning away, a foot step towards or away, or in the character's expression. In the present study, therefore, 'embodied behaviour' is seen as a potential locus of what unfolded in these wider power relations as they become locally visible.

Mocbil (2025) is satirical in its depiction of the play and brings the argument that Shaw is satirizing and criticizing class divisions, social hierarchy and gender roles. This view makes us aware of the possibility of social criticism being suggested indirectly, via the contrast between what is conveyed and what is performed.

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The study does not address the use of action–dialogue relations but it does address the satirical function so as to argue that the use of bodily behaviour can be in harmony with meanings that go beyond literal dialogue. The present research will therefore not only see disjunction as inconsistency, but also as a possible and valuable technique in the field of drama.

In addition to Pygmalion, Abeliovich and Ramati (2025) do more work with elements of vocality and theatricality between human and machine, but, in both cases, the importance of treating theatrical performance as an expression of material is seen. Their emphasis on performativity implies that voice and performance are not necessarily autonomous from the production of meaning. The need for intonation to be taken into due account to analyze speech is similarly evident in the work of Pratheeba and Neelakandan (2023). Adopted en bloc, these studies contribute to a general characterization of the concept of drama as language in performance, while the present study establishes a different but related issue: what can be contributed to the concept? This is the physical action element that does not only reproduce the verbal message, but gives it its own unique meaning.

Studies in the recent years have also regularly employed Pygmalion in the fields of sociolinguistic and educational analysis. For instance, in the investigation of standard and non-standard English as a social class indicator, regional and professional identity indicator, Coşar Çelik (2025) uses qualitative document analysis. The study highlights the relevance of the Pygmalion for continued use as a rich text corpus in close qualitative analysis and validates the importance of language to social perception. It continues to be focused on sociolinguistic attributes, however, not on embodied attributes. It again emphasizes the importance of a study that can be done in the context of the same tradition and yet pose a different kind of question concerning the interaction between physical action and oral language.

In total, it can be seen from the studies evaluated that a significant and diverse reservoir of studies on Pygmalion could be identified, but there is also a certain analytical opening. As it appears, structural-functional theory of language, cohesion, discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis, accommodation theory, and computational approach have been studied on dialogue, while class, gender, transformation, power and satire have been studied on the play, and multimodality and stage directions have been studied. Verbal and non-verbal resources are known to contribute to the construction of meaning together in the closest work carried out and noted in relation to the present research, in multimodal studies. A less systematically analysed dimension is when they do not align, in moments. What the present study adds to the literature is the formalization of the more limited notion of action–dialogue disjunction and its consistent use on Shaw's text.

The area of the research gap can then be precisely formulated. There are many analyses available now of what characters say within the text, how language creates identity and power and how the non-verbal/theatrical resources enrich the nuances of the dramatic message. It doesn't work, however, to sufficiently separate those recurring situations in which a specific character's physical interaction/gesture/appearance is different from, qualifies, strengthens, or otherwise clarifies a meaning that is not being conveyed by the dialogue that accompanies it. The present study aims to build a focused analysis of a meaning–bodily expression relationship through treating these moment as action–dialogue connections, in order to explore the linguistic meaning, bodies of expression, characterization, and dramatic interpretation in Pygmalion without claiming the general and not so defendable thesis that 'non-verbal communication in Pygmalion has never been studied'.

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Table 1. Synthesis of Selected Scholarship on Pygmalion and the Present Analytical Gap

Study / Source	Primary focus	Main contribution	Relevance to present gap
Abbas & Awan (2017)	Structural-functional dialogue analysis	Explains exchanges, moves, and changing interactional positions	Primarily verbal; does not systematically compare dialogue with physical action
Nalliveettil (2020)	Linguistic/communicative analysis	Shows the communicative significance of Shaw's language	Does not establish an action–dialogue coding framework
Paramartha (2021)	Cohesion in dialogue	Identifies substitution as a cohesive device	Restricts analysis to verbal cohesion
He & Cao (2022)	Multimodal character interaction	Recognizes verbal and non-verbal resources in dramatic meaning	Closest multimodal study, but does not classify non-equivalence between action and dialogue
Pellatt (2023)	Stage directions	Treats stage directions as meaningful textual material	Supports stage-direction analysis but is not focused on Pygmalion or action–dialogue disjunction
Neuman & Cohen (2024)	Power in conversations	Uses systematic computational analysis of dominance/compliance	Conversation-centred; bodily behaviour is not central
Fatima et al. (2025)	Language, class, identity	Explains accommodation and changing social identity	Focuses on speech adaptation rather than embodied disjunction
Naz et al. (2025)	Language, power, class mobility	Links linguistic control with power and class mobility	Selected dialogue remains the principal evidence
Salah et al. (2025)	Transformation and identity	Highlights identity transformation as a process	Broad thematic approach without formal verbal/physical distinction
Abeliovich & Ramati (2025)	Vocal theatricality/performance	Shows the value of analysing performed language materially	Extends performance thinking but does not address bodily action versus dialogue

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Methodology

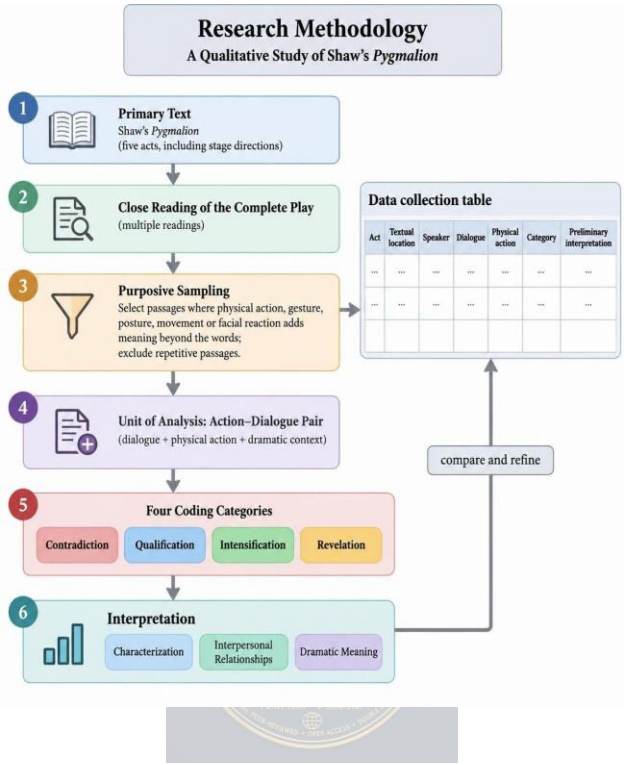

Figure 1. Methodological Flowchart for the Textual Analysis of Action–Dialogue Disjunction

Research Design. The design of the research used in the study is a descriptive qualitative design with textual analysis. Compares the dialogue and the physically represented action in George Bernard Shaw's Pygmalion. A qualitative approach is suitable because the focus here is on interpretation of the emergence of meaning in the interaction of the verbal and embodied resources and not on measuring variables in a statistical sense.

Primary Text.
Main text: Pygmalion (now Elizabeth Barrett) by George Bernard Shaw (1913), five-act play. The entire play (i.e., English text minus stage directions) is the text corpus. An accessible digital edition of the complete text is used for systematic close reading.

Sampling Strategy.
Purposive Textual Sampling is used. The whole play is read carefully, but only pieces in which action, gesture, posture and movement, facial reaction, interpersonal contact and/or spatial motion is explicitly

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applied in regards to the dialogue and where these aspects contribute to the meaning of the play are selected for detailed analysis. Examples are omitted if they do not contribute to the task.

Unit of Analysis.

Duo-action–dialogue is the unit of analysis. Every unit include the character's spoken words, the activity that immediately precedents/lowers depends on as it follows, the supporting context and some explanation of the interpretive connection between the verbal and physical meanings. It maintains the analysis on the exact cause and effect of what a character says and what the character physically does.

Analytical Categories. The analysis followed four categories. Contradiction is physical behaviour that contradicts the apparent meaning of a spoken word. Qualifying is action that restricts, modifies or confuses the verbal meanings. Intensification comprise actions that make the emotion and/or interpersonal meaning in the dialogue stronger than it is already. Revelation is a revelation of an emotion, an intention, an attitude, or a relationship which is not revealed or has been left open in an overt statement.

Table 2. Operational Coding Framework for Action–Dialogue Disjunction

Category	Operational definition	Interpretive question
Contradiction	Physical action conflicts with the apparent meaning of the spoken statement.	What does the body communicate that is inconsistent with the words?
Qualification	Physical action limits, modifies, or complicates the spoken statement.	How does the action change or narrow the meaning of the utterance?
Intensification	Physical action strengthens an emotional or interpersonal meaning already present in dialogue.	How does the action make the verbal meaning stronger or more forceful?
Revelation	Physical action exposes an emotion, intention, attitude, or relationship concealed or ambiguous in the dialogue.	What does the action reveal that the words do not clearly state?

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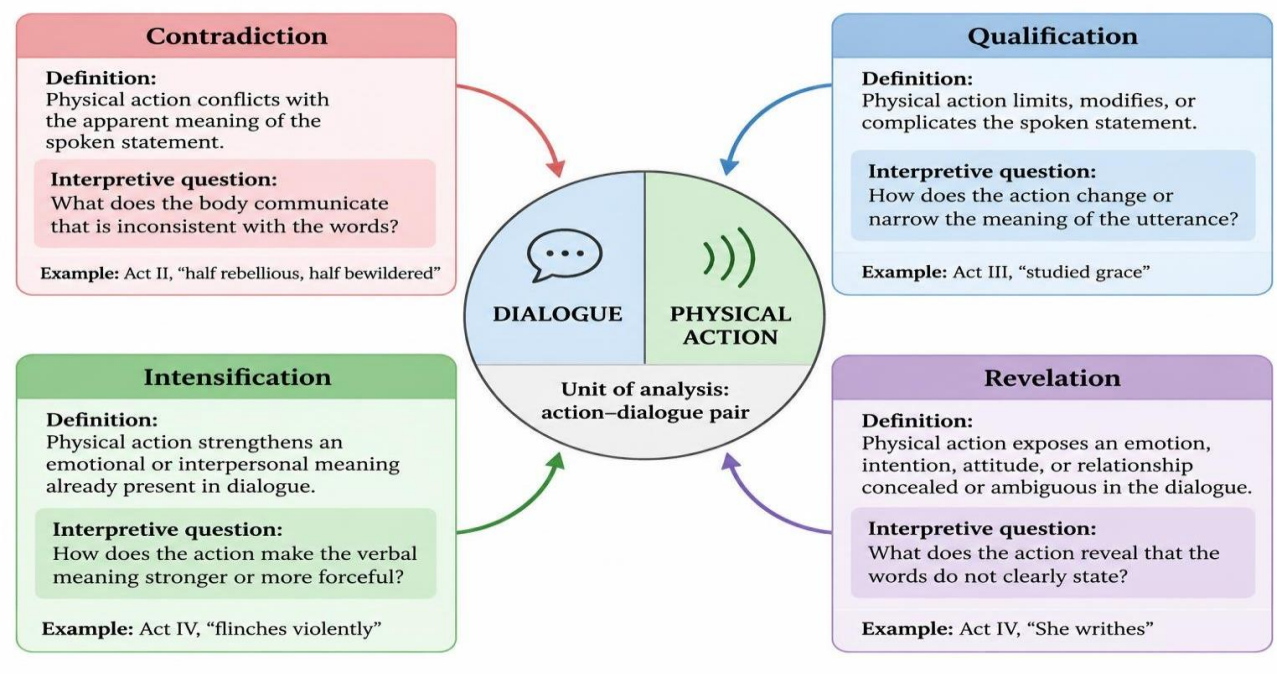

Figure 2. Conceptual Framework of Action–Dialogue Disjunction Showing the Four Analytical Categories

Data Collection Procedure.

Multiple close readings are made of the entire play; the researcher outlines all of the potentially relevant passages, records them in an analagical table which includes the act, range of text, speaker, dialogue, physical action, category, and initial interpretations. Collected examples are then compared and refined for reducing repetitive passages while each example that is kept clearly shows a meaningfully verbal–embodied relationship.

Analytical Procedure.

There are three inter-related levels of analysis. The research at the textual level defines character utterances and performing actions. On the contextual level, it takes into account the drama situation, interpersonal relation, and immediate circumstances. From the level of interpretation up, the relationship can be categorized as contradiction, qualification, intensification, or revelation, and the way the relationship helps develop characterization, interpersonal relationships, and dramatic meaning are analyzed for each of the above.

Theoretical Orientation.

An analysis based on pragmatic and multimodal views. Pragmatics is relevant here, as the meaning of the utterance is determined by the context, intent and interpersonal relationships; a multimodal perspective is relevant because dramatic meaning can be distributed between verbal and non-verbal resources. Such opinions are not considered to be an exhaustive multimodal analysis of all of the features of the play and are offered only as an aid to the analysis.

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Consistency.

In order to maintain consistency and analysis, each of the passages selected for analysis may be analyzed using the same three questions: What does the character say?What does the character mean?What does the character imply? What is the actions taken by the character on the physical level? What new, changed or enhanced meaning becomes apparent in the interplay between them? The selected corpus is then divided into the four categories and applied across the whole corpus.

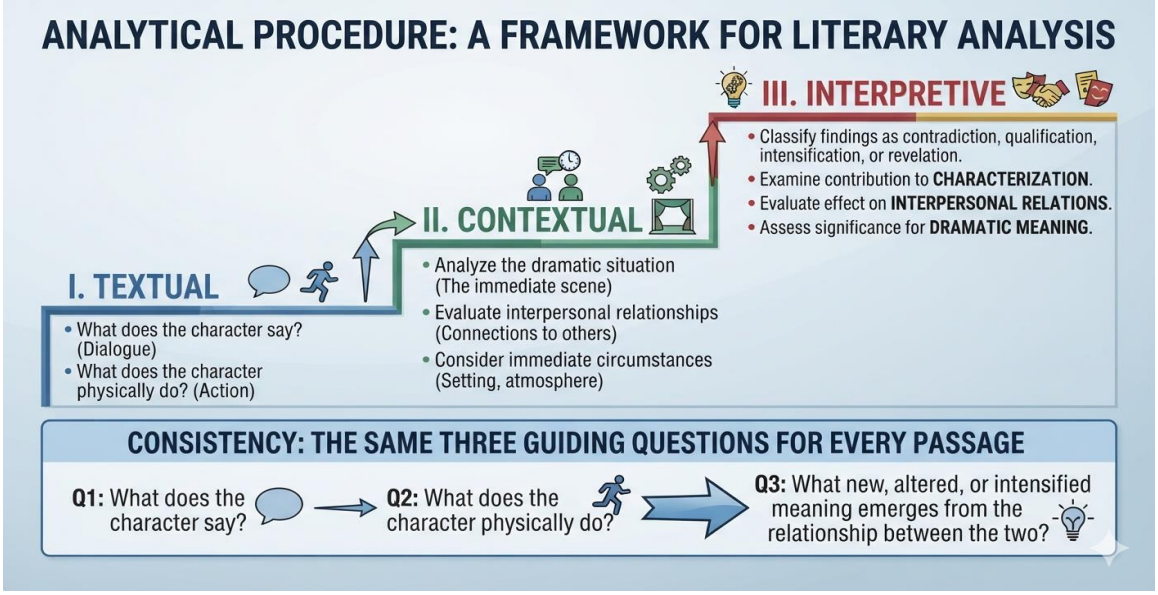

Figure 3. Three-Level Analytical Procedure and Guiding Questions Applied to Each Action–Dialogue Pair

Ethical Considerations. The study uses a published literary text and does not involve human participants, interviews, questionnaires, experiments, or personal data. Accordingly, participant-related ethical approval is not required. All primary and secondary sources are acknowledged through appropriate academic citation.

4. Analysis and Discussion

4.1 Contradiction

Contradiction is a situation in which physical actions of the character contradict the meaning of what was spoken. In one obvious instance this can be seen in Act II when Eliza is told to SIT down! Once Higgins instructs her to get "Sit down," the stage directions read: “She stands, half rebellious, half bewildered.” (Shaw, 1913/1916, Act II). The body's reaction takes its time and is not full-fledged obedience but the resistance with uncertainty. The dialogue command-and-response system is therefore complicated due to her posture. These words project Higgins's power and an acceptance of his power; the physician's physical state is different, that he's not fully absorbed in Higgins's power. This action shows, therefore, the opposition of people and things outside of him to people and things within him, raising interaction to a more complex level than the dialogue.

LIBERAL JOURNAL OF LANGUAGE AND LITERATURE REVIEW
An International Double-Blind Peer-Reviewed Open Access Journal
ISSN (Online): 3006-3175 | ISSN (Print): 3006-3167
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The next scene of a related moment is when Eliza finally responds to Pickering's more polite request to sit down. We can see this difference between Higgins and Pickering's voice tones in Eliza's movements; she is initially against and moved toward the question in response to the imperative and the polite tone, respectively. Physical behaviour provides clues as to the distinction in interpersonal authority even if both exchanges deal with the same basic behavior. Eliza's motion therefore serves as a clue as to how she comes to understand the two men, as well as to how her different emotional response to them informs us of her changing perception of them.

4.2 Qualification

Qualification is when physical action changes or restricts the meaning given by dialog without changing the meaning itself. In Act III Eliza is brought by Higgins's signals and studied grace before Mrs Higgins.In Act III Eliza is brought in guided by Higgins's signals, and with studied grace (Shaw, 1913/1916, Act III). In doing so, her verbal role within the discourse of amiable talk is backed by a well-managed larger performance. The physical action reinforces the apparent spontaneity of her social metamorphosis; Eliza is now able to engage the customary style of social manners that are expected of a member of the upper class, but the stage direction suggests that this behaviour is still external and conscious from her perspective. Her body is thus a marker of the artificial and transitional nature of the cultural identity she is-learning to perform.

Higgins admits to his own protagonistic statement in the same scene. Throughout the difficulties of maintaining social performance, he is the one that stumbles into the fender and over the fire-irons (Shaw, 1913/16, Act III). The intentional accident is counterproductive to the created environment in which he intends to conduct his affairs. He speaks with assurance about his experiment and that of Eliza's training but his physical awkwardness adds a comic instability. The contrast shows how action–dialogue disjunction does not necessarily come from an emotional disjunction, but rather a physical disjunction of the character's assumed control.

4.3 Intensification

Intensification is when physical performance enhances some emotional/intellectual/personalized interpretation or message held within the dialogue. The case of Act IV is a particularly good example. When Eliza sits silent, after the successful social test (Shaw, 1913/1916, Act IV), she is described as being "tired" and "pale" and has an 'expression almost tragic.' But Higgins views the event more through the lens of "Thank God it's over!", as it has just happened. Eliza then "flinches violently" (Shaw, 1913/1916, Act IV). But Higgins' careless remark serves to heighten the emotional overtones due to the violent physical response. His meaning is relief, but her physical response reveals how intense is her personal and emotional crisis when she experiences it. The stage directions thus reveal a divide between Higgins' understanding of the experiment and Eliza's understanding of the results of the experiment.

This strengthening effect is evident in the encounter with the slippers and other items. Eliza wields her physicality to make the verbal battle one of acknowledgement and control. Higgins's subsequent exit is also noted for its "impressive decorum to be followed" (Shaw, 1913/1916, Act IV), and "slags the door savagely" (Shaw, 1913/1916, Act IV). The gesture of anger makes the contradiction already present in the scene even more pronounced because the attempt to conduct oneself in a dignified manner is just immediately hampered by an out-of-control gesture of anger. The apostrobe is then more powerful than his formal speech exit of slammed door would imply.

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4.4 Revelation

Revelation is when physical actions reveal an emotion, intention or relationship that might not be obvious if the person said it.Revelation is when physical behaviour brings forth an emotion or an intention or a relationship that is not clear when spoken. As Higgins pats Eliza on the shoulder the direction is given: "She writhes" (Shaw, 1913/1916: Act IV). For Higgins it's presented as condescendingly, but the text's physical response suggests that Eliza is not comforted by it. Her comment tends to give the stronger clues about what she means than any comment that Higgins can make, and with the polite vehemence of the moment. The action exposes the psychological separation, animosity and reverence they demonstrate between them.

Eliza's sudden leap from her seat to escape him and her sitting down facing the back on his words, to hide her face (Shaw, 1913/1916, Act IV), make the revelation even more pronounced. It's as if she is pulling back from the action, but the dialogue doesn't catch up until she's reaching her final destination. Likewise, Higgins reacts to confrontation by moving about with his body, jiggling items in his pockets, looking at things and eating an apple. Such activities show signs of unease and unrest in addition to his efforts to wrestle verbal control. Then there is another route of communication out there about the conflict via the body.

The ring episode is another good instance. Higgins rushes into the fireplace, "dashing the ring violently into the fireplace" (Shaw, 1913/1916, Act IV). The physical intensity of one's gesture makes the emotional intensity of one's exchange tangible. Similarly, he swishes his last shot at the last moment, sending the door slamming shut at the last second. These are actions that show that this relationship is no longer a controlled teacher–student interaction, but a conflictual relationship. Emotional meaning, then, may only partially be gleaned from characters' utterances; in part, the reader's perception must be based on the physical evidence instead.

4.5 Action –Dialogue Disjunction and Eliza's transformation

The four modes of disjunction gain in importance as they are considered through a change in Eliza. Her physical reactions often indicate fear, uncertainty and opposition as early as the beginning of the play. Throughout the training she learns some regulated gestures, posture and social etiquette. However the latter acts are shown to be a testament to the fact that changes in language and behavior do not abolish emotional conflict. The body still emits certain messages that her trained social mouth may not be able to produce. "Action–dialogue disjunction" is a device that Shaw uses to illustrate the distinction between a performance of a social role and true psychological independence in this regard.

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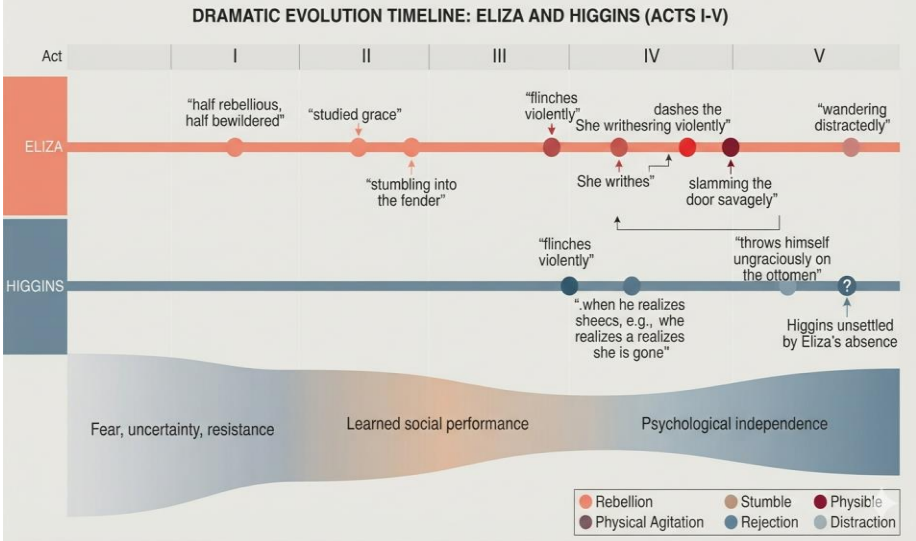

Figure 4. Dramatic Timeline of Physical Actions Across Acts I-V in Eliza's Transformation and Higgins's Changing Position

This is continued in Act V, as Higgins' physical actions demonstrate this himself, following Eliza's departure. He is represented as "wandering distractedly across the room" and "throws himself ungraciously on the ottoman" (Shaw, 1913/1916, V). In his actions, he displays emotional needs and disturbances at a time when his verbal mission still is striving to sustain authority. It's important to note the turnaround – the one controlling Eliza's actions now is the one who feels disembodied. The contrast brings the general idea into the play that, however, relationships change physically, as well, even though they are not acknowledged verbally.

4.6 The Aviation System; Action–Dialogue Disjunction, Power, and Interpersonal Relationships

Action–dialogue disjunction are also devices that demonstrate the power in the play. If verbal authority can lead to emotional submission, it doesn't, as Eliza's physical actions have shown. When dealing with resistance, withdrawal, flinching, writhing, and posture shifts that occur again and again, the extent to which Higgins maintains his control becomes clear. At other times, however, when Eliza displays socially proper gestures, it shows how manipulation of the body can be a source of power, in addition to power through speech. A body response to the said and the conversation that follows the interaction, then, are related by the characters.

This interaction can be particularly significant for characterization. A constant opposition is maintained between intellectual assertiveness and the physical indications of impatience, agitation and/or loss of control, as Higgins is built. Eliza, on the other hand, transforms from a candy shop owner whose societal standing and feelings of unease are undermined by fear into someone who can resist and resist violently enough to make a choice for herself. This development is physical, that is, it can be seen in her actions—she may give emotional expression before, beyond or against the emotional claims of either herself or others. Action–dialogue disjunction thus works as a device for demonstrating a character's development—and not as a tool for conveying stage movement in the dialogue.

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LJLLR
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Table 3. Evidence-to-Research-Question Mapping in the Analysis

Analytical category	Illustrative textual evidence	Primary meaning produced	Research relevance
Contradiction	Eliza is "half rebellious, half bewildered" while responding to social pressure in Act II.	Her bodily state complicates the apparent interactional command and shows resistance/uncertainty.	RQ1–RQ2; demonstrates non-equivalence between verbal interaction and embodied response.
Qualification	Eliza approaches Mrs Higgins with "studied grace" under Higgins's signals in Act III.	The physical performance qualifies the impression that her transformation is spontaneous or complete.	RQ1–RQ3; connects bodily performance with transformation.
Intensification	Eliza "flinches violently" after Higgins's "Thank God it's over!" in Act IV.	The bodily reaction intensifies the emotional injury implied by the exchange.	RQ2–RQ3; shows emotional meaning beyond literal dialogue.
Revelation	Eliza "writhes" when Higgins pats her shoulder and later withdraws from him in Act IV.	Her body reveals distress and rejection despite Higgins's apparently friendly gesture.	RQ2–RQ3; exposes interpersonal conflict and changing power relations.
Revelation / reversal	Higgins "wandering distractedly across the room" after Eliza leaves in Act V.	His physical agitation reveals dependence and loss of control.	RQ3; demonstrates characterization and reversal of interpersonal power.

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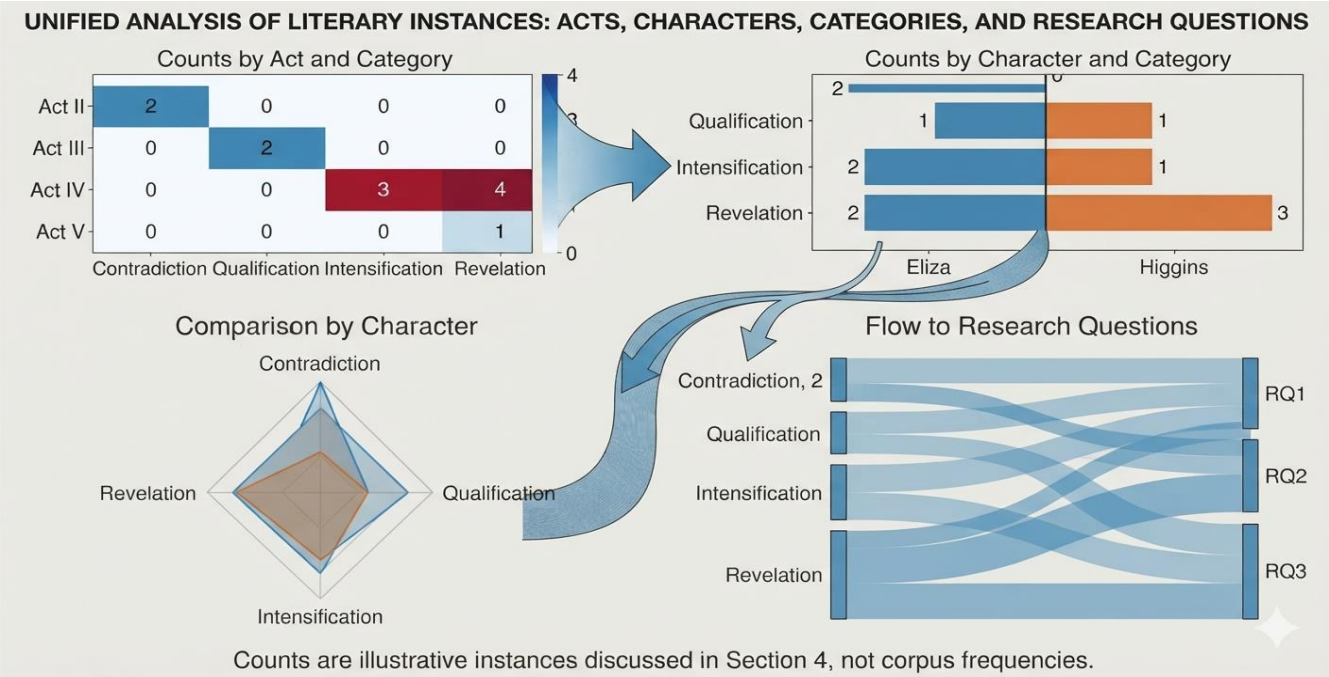

Figure 5. Distribution of Illustrative Action-Dialogue Disjunctions by (a) Act and Category, (b) Character, (c) Category Profile, and (d) Mapping to the Research Questions

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

Finally, this study has discussed the phenomenon of action–dialogue disjunction in Pygmalion based on the view that dialogue is spoken action and action is physical dialogue by considering dialogue and action as an analytical unit simultaneously. The analysis shows that the information contained in stage directions, gestures, posture, movement and body reaction not only conveys instructions for the actors but also contains information to uncover not only the meaning of the spoken word but also character traits and relationships which would otherwise remain ambiguous, leaving unexplainable nuances in a text to be interpreted through body language as well as speech. These relationships can be identified throughout the play, in a focused way through the four categories of contradiction, qualification, intensification, and revelation. It is in these forms that Shaw displays affective opposition, indecision, social activity, rage, reliance, and modification of the forces of social power that are revealed by characters' words and actions. The study does not pretend to break new ground in the field of the study of Pygmalion by introducing a standard 'non-verbal' or 'stage directions' approach; it is simply a functional addition to the work that has already been done on Pygmalion from a focused 'action–dialogue' perspective. It is in the distinct way it investigates narrative implicitness of dialogue and actions, which reveals how acts that are not equivalent can be used as a reoccurring tool of characterisation and dramatic intuition.

5.2 Recommendations for Future Researchers :

This research can be continued by comparing other plays written by George Bernard Shaw in the light of the action-dialect disjunction concept, and by using the same method in other important works of drama in

different time periods and different cultures. Comparative studies might look at the difference of contradiction, qualification, intensification and revelation in genres, periods or theatrical traditions. Yet another area for research is to draw on expert performance-based evidence, such as recorded stage performance productions, to examine the possibility of reproducing, altering, and/or reinterpretation of the physical meaning(s) represented by the stage directions. Moving forward, another good direction would be to explore and expand upon the interactions between action–dialogue disjunction and gender, class, power, and/or identity. Close qualitative, non-digital analysis of individual scenes could also continue, with the digitization providing tools for mapping patterns of similarity and difference between action–dialogue sequences at a larger level within the Dramatic Corpus. Lastly, methodological refinements in coding categories may be needed in future studies as well as testing this approach with other texts to make sure its analyticity is evaluated beyond Pygmalion.

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