

allows them not only to understand the text and enrich vocabulary, but also to go a little later in the meaning of the text and to find new ways of thinking about the meaning in the study of literary texts.

Finally, we are able to summarize the most important experiences that students have had from their productions and their own experiences.

- Possibility to have a higher level of English.
- Enrichment of vocabulary.
- Improved capacity for analysis and understanding of texts.
- Stimulation of motivation.
- Awakening of interest to read.

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### **REALISM IN ARMS AND THE MAN: A COMPARATIVE STUDY – REALISM AND IDEALISM**

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#### **Rezumat**

*În această cercetare sunt evidențiate elemente de realism în lucrarea „**Arms and the Man**”(1894) de George Bernard Shaw, o anti-comedie romantică. Prin elementele de realism, Shaw încearcă să*

*prezintă o imagine reală a societății. În această lucrare sunt prezentate idei romantice de dragoste și război. Aceasta piesa este o satiră de glorificare a războiului, bazându-se pe dragoste. Articolul încearcă să prezinte două idei contrastive: realism și idealism.*

Literary realism is a style in literature that presents things and people as they are in real life. It is opposed to romanticism or idealism. It is a way of seeing, accepting and dealing with situations as they really are without being influenced by emotions or false hopes. It is a concept that believes in reflecting real life situations. Moreover, most often, literary realism refers to the trend, beginning with certain works of nineteenth-century French literature and extending to late nineteenth and early twentieth century authors in various countries, toward depictions of contemporary life and society - as they were". The realist writers presented the society as it was. They adopted realistic everyday activities which were common those days. Besides, realism „is applied by literary critics in two diverse ways: (1) to identify a movement in the writing of novels during the nineteenth century that included Honore de Balzac in France, George Eliot in England, and William Dean Howells in America, and (2) to designate a recurrent mode, in various eras and literary forms, of representing human life and experience in literature” [1, pp. 302-03]. Moreover, - „realistic fiction is often opposed to romantic fiction. The romance is said to present life as we would have it to be more picturesque, fantastic, adventurous, or heroic than actuality; realism, on the other hand, is said to represent life as it really is” [2, p. 175]. Thus it is clear that the purpose of realistic fiction is to give the effect that it represents life and society that suits and evokes the common reader.

G. B. Shaw (1856-1950) a towering figure of his time, depicted his society candidly for which he suffered criticism in early days. But later on, he established his image as an anti-romantic in his society. As we know that literature is mirror of society, Shaw reflects the same

beautifully in his works. Shaw for writing plays, was very much impressed by Henrik Ibsen, who pioneered modern realistic drama, meaning designed to heighten awareness of some important social issues and sensitize the audience. Subsequently, Shaw made it a forum for considering moral, political, social and economic issues of his day, possibly his most important contribution to dramatic art. The title of the play *Arms and the Man* is taken from the opening line of the epic poem „*The Aeneid*” written in 19 BC by the Roman poet Virgil. In *The Aeneid*, „of arms and the man I sing”, Virgil glorifies war whereas Shaw employs irony in the title *Arms and the Man*. He (Shaw) attacks romantic notion of war. The conflict in *Arms and the Man* is between opposing beliefs and ideas: the romantic or idealistic notions of war and love which are held by Raina (the heroine) and the realistic picture of war drawn by Bluntschli, as well as the practical side of love and marriage as expressed by Louka. *Arms and the Man* is one of the earliest plays by Bernard Shaw. It appears to be amusing but has a serious message. It is amusing as well as thought- provoking. Here laughter and seriousness are juxtaposed. For realities of love and marriage my views are corroborated with A.C. Ward's observation: The realities of love and marriage became one of the most frequent themes in Shaw's plays throughout the remainder of his long life. He thought of marriage not as a means of satisfying the personal desires of individual men and women, nor as a means of strengthening family ties, but as the means of bringing to birth a new and better generation. Though no one can predict with certainty the consequences of any marriage, Shaw never swerved from the conviction that marriage is a solemn contract, not a frivolous domestic excursion. In *Arms and the Man* and often elsewhere he laughed at this the humors Raina, Sergius and Bluntschli lay the memories of Shaw's own childhood in a home shadowed by the failure of his own parent's marriage.

In *Arms and the Man*, the treatment of real English life was under Ibsen's influence that serious drama from 1890 onward ceased to

deal with themes remote in time or place. Ibsen had taught men that drama, if it was to live a true life of its own, must deal with human life emotions, with things near and dear to ordinary men and women. Hence melodramatic romanticism and treatment of remote historic themes alike disappeared in favor of a treatment of actual English life, first of aristocratic life, then of middle-class lives, and finally of laboring conditions. For its own stage types, Victorian audience understood well enough, or at least took for granted. Shaw's efforts, insofar as he ventured into criticism. His energies were concentrated on explaining and shielding his infusion of the real elements. Once he came into defense for the real elements in —*Arms and the Man* „in weekly pieces for —*The Saturday Review*”. In an essay entitled —*A Dramatic Realist to His Critics*" explains how the infusion of reality affects dramatic characters:

Shaw discovered early the deceptions of society, and made them his special targets. Shaw sets himself against this social alignment. He embraces Ibsenism because he — sees in it the exposure of *ideals* to the cold light of the day. The idealist hides from fact because he hates himself; the realist sees in ideals — „only something to blind us, something to numb us, something to murder self in us, something whereby, instead of resisting death, we can disarm it by committing suicide” [16] For Shaw, blindness to reality is spiritual death. In a similar vein, — the theme of reality and corrupting ideals counts much in Shaw's play, too. „One has only to think of *Candida*, *Bluntschli*, *Caesar*, *Undershaft*, and the like to realize that many Shavian heroes are realists warring genially against the idealists that surrounds them” [3, p. 37].

The drama presents character in action. In other words, drama means 'action'. Most likely, Shaw has patterned *Arms and the Man* on Scribe's most successful play, *Bataille de Dames* but with a difference. In Shaw's best plays we notice that the principle of reversal pervades. Such a play is *Arms and the Man*. The „idea of taking two couples and

causing them to exchange partners is hardly novel, and the little tale of the coat the portrait is Scribean in pattern" [3, p. 182]. But Shaw can justifiably plead that this is no well-made play because the artifices of the plot are not what ultimately achieve the result.

„*The Arms and the Man* does not round off the dual anti-climaxes. It is — not the disenchantment of Raina and Sergius but the discovery that Bluntschli, the realist, is actually an enchanted soul whom nothing will disenchant. He has destroyed their romanticism but he is — incurably romantic" [4, p. 84].

Now let us talk about the form of the play. *In Arms and the Man* Shaw has used bathos and not pathos. Firstly the officer appears to be heroic and later on he is laughed at by everyone. While the curtain goes up, „a man remembering his youth, and he should only reveal himself as violent pork-butcher when someone interrupted him with an order for pork. This merely technical originality is indicated in the very title of the play. The name itself is meant to be bathos; arms and the man" [4, p. 23]. In *Arms and the Man* — „the bathos of form was strictly the incarnation of a strong satire in the idea" [4, p. 96]. The play opens with an atmosphere of military melodrama; the dashing officer of cavalry going off to death in an attitude, the lovely heroine left in tearful rapture; the brass band, the noise of guns and the red fire. Bluntschli, the Swiss professional soldier, makes his entry here. He is a man with trade though without country. He tells Raina, the army adoring heroine, frankly that she is a humbug; and she, in a moment, agrees with him. By the end of the play the young lady Raina — „has lost all her military illusions and admires this mercenary soldier not because he faces guns, but because he faces facts" [5, p. 92]. At length, Shaw, as a practitioner of realism, concludes *Arms and the Man* with realistic note.

### **Conclusion**

*Arms and the Man* is a wonderful play by Bernard Shaw that reflects wonderfully the elements of realism. In this play, Shaw attacks genially the romantic notions of war and love. He has adopted realistic

approach in depicting every day activities which were common those days. Here Shaw attacks the social follies of society in order to bring a positive change for which he received criticism. Shaw rejects romanticism in order to embrace realism. Finally, he succeeds in his attempt to exhibit the idea of the realist trumping the idealist.

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## **PROVOCĂRI ÎN DEZVOLTAREA COMPETENȚEI SOCIOLINGVISTICE LA LIMBA ENGLEZĂ LA STUDENȚII DIN MOLDOVA**

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### **Summary**

*Developing sociolinguistic competence has been deemed a delicate and controversial task in EFL for a number of reasons. Among these is the fact that foreign language learners come to classes with this competence already formed in mother tongue and it is not easy to develop a new system of socio-cultural values and to observe new sociolinguistic norms in communication. This article taps into some of the problems that Moldavian students face when dealing with socio-cultural awareness emphasizing the necessity of approaching sociolinguistic competence in a more responsible manner, despite the*