



Drama **RESEARCH**

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The Problem of Responsibility: an examination of Bakhtin's dialogic concepts of 'answerability' and 'ethical understanding', and their importance for process drama in the first years of schooling.

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The term 'dialogic' has been applied general teaching approaches (Wells 1998), and to recommendations for learning through talk in the classroom (Alexander 2003). The term has also been used to describe drama as a learning medium; in 1995, the drama theorist/practitioner, Cecily O'Neill referred to the pedagogies of Dorothy Heathcote and Gavin Bolton as 'dialogic':

Together, Heathcote and Bolton propose an approach to the curriculum that is purposeful, dialogic, emancipatory and metaphoric.

(O'Neill in Heathcote and Bolton, 1995:.vii).

In more recent times, drama education research uses the term dialogic, and at times, draws on the writings of the Russian philosopher Mikhail Bakhtin (Kempe and Holroyd 2004; Somers 2005; Neelands in Ackroyd [ed.] 2006; Winters, Rogers and Schofield in Schneider *et al* [eds.] 2006).

Dialogism is part of a complex philosophy that formed Bakhtin's worldview. The Bakhtinian theorist, Caryl Emerson, explained 'dialogism' as living:

in a state of promise where we expect something productive of the world, but are not determined by that product.

(Emerson, 1997: .16).

While Bakhtin did not offer a concise definition of dialogism, he discussed 'dialogic outcomes' that arose from a developing understanding of self in relation to others. He termed this 'creative understanding' (Bakhtin, 1986:.7), which drew on the following component dialogic concepts:

Taylor, P. (ed.) (1996) *Researching Drama and Arts Education: Paradigms and Possibilities*. London: The Falmer Press.

Wells, G. (1999) *Dialogic Inquiry: Towards a Socio-cultural Practice and Theory of Education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Winters, K., Rogers, T. & Schofield, A., *The Antigone Project: Using Drama and Multiple Literacies to Support Print Literacy Among Youth*, in Schneider, J., Crumpler, T. & T. Rogers (2006), *Process Drama and Multiple Literacies: Addressing Social, Cultural and Ethical Issues*. Portsmouth, NH: Heineman.

Children's Literature

Burningham, J. (1992) *Come Away from the water, Shirley!* (illustrated by John Burningham), London: Random House.

Burningham, J. (1994) *Time to Get Out of the Bath, Shirley!* (illustrated by John Burningham) London: Red Fox Picture Books, Random House.

Cowley, J. (1993) *Mrs Wishy-Washy* (illustrated by Katherine Fuller) Bromley: Shortlands.

Rosen, M. (1989) *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* (illustrated by Helen Oxenbury) New York: Aladdin paperbacks, Simon and Schuster.

Waddell, M. (1995) *Farmer Duck* (illustrated by Helen Oxenbury) London: Walker Books.