
Vygotsky and Dialogic Pedagogy

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This article explores differences in the meaning and pedagogic implications of the terms 'dialogic' and 'dialectical'. This is set within a consideration of a wider understanding of Vygotsky's understandings of mediation within pedagogic relations. The model of mutual shaping of person and social situation is taken as the main thrust of an argument which posits the Russian term for the processes of teaching and learning, 'obuchenie' as a dialogic conception of pedagogy which encompasses not only a dialectical understanding of the social relations of schooling but also of conceptual development. It is argued that these ideas present significant challenges to educators. However resort to transmission based pedagogies as a retreat from the demands of 'obuchenie' are not seen as the answer if democratic solutions to mass education are sought. It is well known that some learners come to school well prepared to manage ineffective instruction. They would benefit much more from dialogic engagement with their teachers' understanding of the world and those who are not suitably prepared to manage inappropriate instruction would be given genuine opportunities to learn.

Keywords: Dialogic, Dialectical, Mediation, Instruction, Vygotsky

Vygotsky considered the capacity to teach and to benefit from instruction is a fundamental attribute of human beings. "Vygotsky's primary contribution was in developing a general approach that brought education, as a fundamental human activity, fully into a theory of psychological development. Human pedagogy, in all its forms, is the defining characteristic of his approach, the central concept in his system [34, p. 15]. Whilst he declared an interest in more broadly defined sociocultural development he spent a major part of his time focusing on a somewhat constrained operational definition of the "social" in his investigations of individual development in instructional settings [50; 51].

Vygotsky's [44] 'general genetic law genetic development' asserts the primacy of this account of the social in development:

'every function in the child's cultural development appears twice: first, on the social level, and later, on the individual level; first between people (interpsychological), and then inside the child (intrapsychological). This applies equally to voluntary attention, to logical memory, and to the formation of concepts. All the higher functions originate as actual relations between human individuals' [44, p. 57].

This introduces the notion of some form of relationship between something which is defined as 'social' and something which is defined as 'individual'. As I will outline below, my use of the term 'mediation' suggests that this is not necessarily a direct relationship from the social to the individual. However, there is an important conceptual move to be made between a dualistic conception of this relationship and the dialectical relationship which Cole implies below:

'The dual process of shaping and being shaped through culture implies that humans inhabit 'intentional' (constituted) worlds within which the traditional dichotomies of subject and object, person and environment, and so on cannot be analytically separated and temporally ordered into independent and dependent variables [12, p. 103].

Sameroff [37] provided an important contribution to the debates on psychology and systems theory with the introduction of concept of 'dialectics' within which development was seen as driven by internal contradictions. Earlier, Riegel [36] and Wozniak [56] had criticised traditional psychology with its emphasis on balance and equilibrium. It was Riegel who produced a manifesto for Dialectical Psychology which emphasised contradic-

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tions and their synchronisations in short and long term development both in the individual and in society [36, p. 689]. Surprisingly this work is rarely cited in discussions of Vygotsky's work. The details of their approach differ whilst the key emphasis on dialectical processes remains very similar. As Van der Veer and Valsiner [40] remind us Vygotsky most definitely adopted a dialectical world view. This was the case for his theories as well as his approach to method and criticism.

'A present day psychologist is most likely to adopt a non-dialectical 'either – or' perspective when determining the 'class membership' of one or other approach in psychology. Hence the frequent non dialectical contrasts between 'Piagetian' and 'Vygotskian' approaches, or the wide spread separation of psychologists into 'social' versus 'cognitive' categories which seem to occupy our minds in their meta-psychological activities... in direct contrast , for Vygotsky any two opposing directions of thought serve as opposites united with one another in the continuous whole- the discourse on ideas. This discourse is expected to lead us to a more adequate understanding of the human psyche, that is , to transcend the present state of theoretical knowledge, rather than force the existing variety of ideas into a strict classification of tendencies in the socially constructed scientific discipline of psychology.' [40, pp. 392–393].

This dialectical stance pervaded all aspects of his thinking as is clear from the way in which he theorises the genetic influence on development.

Development is not a simple function which can be wholly determined by adding X units of heredity to Y units of environment. It is a historical complex which, at every stage, reveals the past which is a part of it....Development, according to a well-known definition, is precisely the struggle of opposites. This view alone can support truly dialectical research on the process of children's development. [40, pp. 282–283).

Dialectical or dialogic

In a critique of Wertsch and Kazak [53], Wegerif [46] argues that Vygotsky was a dialectical thinker rather than a dialogical thinker. His concern is that neither Vygotsky nor Wertsch can provide an account of creative thinking. He cites Bakhtin [5] as part of his attempt to clarify the distinction:

Take a dialogue and remove the voices (the partitioning of voices), remove the intonations (emotional and individualizing ones), carve out abstract concepts and judgments from living words and responses, cram everything into one abstract consciousness -- and that's how you get dialectics. [5, p. 147].

The core of his argument involves the questioning of the suggestion that dialogues in education can be adequately studied through a focus on mediation by tools. He calls for an extension of the Wertsch position in order to obtain a greater sophistication in the understanding of dialogic relations in education. In what amounts to a strong version of the process ontology

argument which Sawyer (2002) suggests that processes are real and that entities, structures or patterns are ephemeral and do not really exist. he argues that uses of the term 'dialogic' shown below could have been developed without specific reference to dialogic methods.

- Dialogic as pertaining to dialogue suggests the promotion of dialogue as chains of questions in classrooms both through teacher-pupil dialogues [2] and through establishing communities of inquiry [47].

- Dialogic as being about the open and poly-vocal properties of texts brings in the need for intertextuality in classrooms [30; 25] and the appropriation of social discourses as a goal in education [21; 50].

- Dialogic as an epistemologic framework suggests an account of education as the discursive construction of shared knowledge [31].

His predilection is with dialogic as an ontological principle:

the most important thing to be learnt is learning itself and, to achieve this, teachers need to be even more teachable than their students. ...: dialogue is not primarily a means to the end of knowledge construction, but an end in itself, the most important end of education . In my view the ideal of 'teaching' learning to learn through promoting dialogue as an end in itself is the most distinctive and important contribution that a dialogic perspective brings to the debate about education [46].

This debate appears to me to witness the way in which this body of theory is open to a wide range of interpretations. Thus when a particular philosophical perspective (e.g a fraction of post structuralist or post modern theory) is brought to bear on a body of writing which does not share its epistemological and ontological assumptions then critical attention is directed and deflected according to different priorities.

The position I have adopted on this matter is that Vygotsky used a dialectical method in his research and posited dialectical processes of social formation. The implication being that a form of dialogic pedagogy is a requisite component of effective teaching.

Beyond the face to face

Vygotsky's [44] accounts of mediation by tools or artefacts and of the social origins of higher mental functioning may be read solely in terms of a movement from exchange between people to the development of individual competence. This reading ignores the origins of artefacts themselves. They are the products of individual and collective endeavour.

'Like Ilyenkov after him, Vygotsky recognises that as much as culture creates individuals, culture itself remains a human creation.' [7, p. 11].

As Bakhurst, and Sypnowich imply, ways of thinking and feeling may be influenced and shaped by the availability of cultural artefacts which are themselves the products of mediated activity. This was a theory which took account of the mediational function of artefacts which were human products. It did so in the context of

a theory in which the 'social' occupied a position of primacy

'human learning presupposes a specific social nature and a process by which children grow into the intellectual life of those around them' [44, p. 88].

However, in his early writing, Vygotsky provides an emergent sociological position on pedagogy which hints at the way in which he understood this 'intellectual life'. He argues that "pedagogy is never and was never politically indifferent, since, willingly or unwillingly, through its own work on the psyche, it has always adopted a particular social pattern, political line, in accordance with the dominant social class that has guided its interests" [42, p. 348]. Vygotsky was suggesting a process of social formation in the development of educational ideas. For him pedagogies arise and are shaped in particular social circumstances. He is also seen, by some commentators, as being concerned with much more than face to face interactions between teacher and taught:

"Vygotsky attached the greatest importance to the content of educational curricula but placed the emphasis on the structural and instrumental aspects of that content ---- In this connection it must be said that Vygotsky did not take these fruitful ideas far enough. In this approach it is quite possible to regard the school itself as a 'message' that is, a fundamental factor of education, because, as an institution and quite apart from the content of its teaching, it implies a certain structuring of time and space and is based on a system of social relations (between pupils and teacher, between the pupils themselves, between the school and its surroundings, and so on)" [22, p. 434].

This statement calls for a radical extension in the scope of the understanding of pedagogy than has been adopted in much classroom research. It would seem that a similar challenge has also been noted by others.

".. the impact of broader social and institutional structures on people's psychological understanding of cultural tools. We argue that in order to understand social mediation it is necessary to take into account ways in which the practices of a community, such as school and the family, are structured by their institutional context. Cultural tools and the practices they are associated with, have their existence in communities, which in turn occupy positions in the broader social structure. These wider social structures impact on the interactions between the participants and the cultural tools" [1, p. 4].

Taken together with Vygotsky's development of units of analysis that conceptually integrate person and context [87] this understanding of pedagogy may be seen to reveal a concern to create a broadly based account of person formed in and forming culture and society. It suggests that pedagogic provision may be thought of in terms of the arrangement of material things as well as persons.

Russian thinking has developed in a culture which embodied a powerful anti-Cartesian element. This contrasts with the kind of intellectual environment which obtains in many settings in the West where so much

effort has been expended in conceptualising the mind as a "self-contained private realm, set over against the objective, 'external' world of material things, and populated by subjective states revealed only to the 'self' presiding over them" [6, pp. 155–156]. The argument is that culture and community are not merely independent factors which discriminate between settings. They are, as it were, the mediational medium with and through which ideas are developed. It is through tool use that individual/ psychological and cultural / historical processes become interwoven and co-create each other. This understanding lay at the very heart of Vygotsky's thesis. It underpins Cole's [12] model of culture as that which weaves together.

Vygotsky described psychological tools as devices for mastering mental processes. They were seen as artificial and of social rather than organic or individual origin. In line with Werstch's [48] distinction between Vygotsky's writing which seems to be located within the psychology of stimuli and stimulus means and that which seems to owe more to his roots in semiotics, literary theory, art and drama, the notion of psychological tool moved from its initial somewhat instrumental form to an emphasis on the development of meaning. As Knox and Stevens note:

Vygotsky was stating that humans master themselves from the "outside" through symbolic, cultural systems. What needs to be stressed here is his position that it is not the tools or signs, in and of themselves, which are important for thought development but the *meaning* encoded in them. Theoretically, then, the type of symbolic system should not matter, as long as meaning is retained. All systems (Braille for the blind and for the deaf, dactylology or finger spelling, mimicry or a natural gesticulated sign language) are tools embedded in action and give rise to meaning as such. They allow a child to internalise language and develop those higher mental functions for which language serves as a basis. In actuality, qualitatively different mediational means may result in qualitatively different forms of higher mental functioning [33, p. 15].

Wartofsky defined artefacts (including tools and language) as objectifications of human needs and intentions already invested with cognitive and affective content [45, p. 204]. He distinguishes between three hierarchical levels of the notion of artefacts. Primary artefacts are those such as needles, clubs, bowls, which are used directly in the making of things. Secondary artefacts are representations of primary artefacts and of modes of action using primary artefacts. They are therefore traditions or beliefs. Tertiary artefacts are imagined worlds [45]. Works of art are examples of these tertiary artefacts or imagined worlds. These three levels of artefact function in processes of cultural mediation. These processes may be viewed as pedagogic in the widest sense of the term. The view of mediation which is implied by Wartofsky's definition of artefacts is compatible with that being developed by Wertsch [48]. Implicit mediation is:

"part of an already ongoing communicative stream that is brought into contact with other forms of action.

Indeed, one of the properties that characterizes implicit mediation is that it involves signs, especially natural language, whose primary function is communication. In contrast to the case for explicit mediation, these signs are not purposefully introduced into human action and they do not initially emerge for the purpose of organizing it. Instead, they are part of a pre-existing, independent stream of communicative action that becomes integrated with other forms of goal-directed behavior. ---implicit mediation typically involves signs in the form of natural language that have evolved in the service of communication and are then harnessed in other forms of activity. Because the integration of signs into remembering, thinking, and other forms of mental functioning occurs as part of the naturally occurring dialectic outlined by Shpet and Vygotsky, they do not readily become the object of consciousness or reflection" [48, p. 185].

Prawat [35] argues that Vygotsky's later work offers a mediational account of meaning-making which is also social, embodied, and transactional. This position is elaborated by Kozulin [34] who discusses three possible generators of consciousness.

- the historical nature of human experience 'human beings make a wide use of non-biological heredity transmitting knowledge, experiences and symbolic tools from generation to generation'

- the social environment and experiences of others. Through drawing out the similarities between Mead and Vygotsky he emphasises that 'an individual becomes aware of him- or herself only in and through interactions with others

- the existence of mental images and schemas prior to actual action. ... 'human experience is always present in two different planes – the plane of actual occurrences and the plane of their internal cognitive schematizations' [34, p. 10].

Where Prawat speaks of social, embodied, and transactional, Kozulin speaks of history, interaction and internal cognitive schematisations, a position which echoes some version of analytical dualism. There are tensions between the two positions: Kozulin's emphasis on history which is not made explicit in Prawat's use of the term 'social'; Prawat's use of transaction has a more dialectical turn than 'interaction' within Kozulin's work; and schematisations is much more specific than embodied. Whilst differences of emphasis are clear, there remains an agreement about the existence of multiple levels of representational activity which occurs in between and within persons.

Bakhurst [7] has done much to clarify the contribution of the Russian philosopher, Ilyenkov, to our understanding of the framework within which so much of the Russian perspective on mediation may be read. The idea of meaning embodied or sedimented in objects as they are put into use in social worlds is central to the conceptual apparatus of theories of culturally mediated, historically developing, practical activity. He provides an account of the way in which humans inscribe significance and value into the very physical objects of their environment [7, p. 173]. A theory of mediation through artefacts infers

that in the course of human activity meaning is sedimented, accumulated or deposited in things. These meanings are remembered both collectively and individually. Thus as Cole [12] reminds us cultural artefacts are always material and ideal and Leander provides an illustration of their embedded nature:

A broad definition of artifact as any mediational means ... would not draw sharp distinctions between semiotic and material artifacts for various reasons. It is difficult not to find at least some material dimension in all mediational means; even sound waves are material.... Secondly, the materiality of artifacts is always deeply embedded in their ideational (cultural and historical) meanings ... Third, transformations between semiotic and material realizations of any artifact are in constant flux, as are the realizations of any artifact as *internal* (e.g., mental models, scenarios) or *external* (charts, diagrams, materials tools) [27, p. 202]

Wertsch [50] and Bruner [9] both analyse narrative and historical texts as cultural tools. Wertsch [50] emphasises that tools or artefacts such as 'conventional' stories or popular histories may not always 'fit' well with a particular personal narrative. As ever with a Vygotskian account there is no necessary recourse to determinism. Wertsch suggests that individuals may resist the way in which such texts 'shape their actions, but they are often highly constrained in the forms that such resistance can take' [50, p. 108] This emphasis on the individual who is active in shaping a response to being shaped by engagement with cultural artefacts is central to the Vygotskian argument. The relative emphasis on agency [whether individual or collective – 50] and the affordances [18] that social, cultural and historical factors offer form the stage on which in the development of new and improved forms of thought is enacted.

As is now well known, Vygotsky was involved in a variety of intellectual pursuits. These ranged from medicine and law to literary theory. Kozulin reminds his readers that Vygotsky was a member of the Russian intelligentsia for whom literature assumed a particular significance.

'A particular feature of the Russian intelligentsia was the importance they attached to literature, which they saw not only as the ultimate embodiment of culture but as the most concentrated form of life itself. Literary characters were routinely judged by the Russian intelligentsia as real social and psychological types, while political and historical debates were commonly conducted in the form of literature and about literature.' Kozulin [26, pp. 22–23].

He has subsequently expanded on this position in an essay on literature as a psychological tool in which he discusses the notion of human psychological life as 'authoring' alongside a consideration of the role of internalised literary modalities as mediators of human experience [24, p. 130].

The understanding of artefacts carrying out different functions, being both material and ideal and circulating between inner and outer worlds in which meaning is developing presents a complex, layered, dialectical view

of human engagement with the world which carries with it a significant methodological challenge for research which aims to study processes of artefact mediated formation of mind.

Vygotsky and Bakhtin

The specific social nature of an activity may, arguably, be characterised, or indeed, realised, in the speech which is used, particularly in pedagogic practice. In a discussion of the way in which speech is theorised Cazden [10] dismissed 'dialect' and 'register' as inadequate for the task of providing a unit of analysis which could connect mind with social interaction. She turned to Bakhtin's term 'voice':

'Voice is Bakhtin's term for the 'speaking consciousness': the person acting — that is speaking or writing in a particular time and place to known or unknown others. Voice and its utterances always express a point of view, always enact particular values. They are also social in still a third meaning: taking account of the voices being addressed, whether in speech or writing. This dialogic quality of utterances Bakhtin calls 'responsivity' or 'addressivity' Cazden [10, p. 198].

Cazden suggested that whilst Vygotsky and Bakhtin had not necessarily met or heard of each other they shared a common intellectual milieu which may well have been the significant precursor in the development of compatible ideas. Wertsch, Tuviste, and Hagstrom, [55] noted complementary features of their work. Bakhtin provides a situated socio-cultural account of semiotic mediation. His emphasis on dialogue and what he termed 'ventriloquism' made way for an understanding of the processes by which the voice or voices of the other or others are appropriated by individuals. As with Wittgenstien's notion of 'language game' so in Bakhtin's notion of dialogue is the insistence that meaning is developed through the interplay and mutual transformation that results from dialogic exchange between two or more influences. Social languages are associated with particular forms of social practice. Social languages can be viewed as a connection between individual functioning and socio-institutional activity which is at one time cultural and historical. They are mediating artefacts. Clearly they must be analytically connected with the activity within which they arise. However this activity may not always be physically present. Vygotsky's attempts at providing the theoretical account of the production of cultural artefacts within specific activities were somewhat underdeveloped. He did discuss the notion of the 'internal social voice'.

Vygotsky insisted that there is no necessary recourse to physical presence in accounts of support within the ZPD. With the following quotation he announced the possibility of virtual collaboration without the physical presence of the adult / teacher.

'when the school child solves a problem at home on the basis of a model that he has been shown in class, he continues to act in collaboration, though at the moment

the teacher is not standing near him. From a psychological perspective, the solution of the second problem is similar to this solution of a problem at home. It is a solution accomplished with the teacher's help. This help — this aspect of collaboration — is invisibly present. It is contained in what looks from the outside like the child's independent solution of the problem' Vygotsky, L.S. [43, p. 216].

Clearly, Vygotsky's reference to virtual support raises some important issues. If support within the ZPD may come from the 'voice' of an absent tutor then surely there is a place for several voices within a particular ZPD. If this is the case then each voice or influence may not necessarily be in agreement. This faces us with a series of decisions or interpretations.

Cheyne and Tarulli [11] announce their intention to develop a broad cultural historical view of the ZPD by discussing issues of dialogue, others and what they refer to as 'third voice'. They compared and contrasted the positions adopted by Bakhtin and Vygotsky on dialogue and noted a crucial distinction:

'In what way would it enrich the event even if I merge with the other and instead of two there would now only be one? And what would I myself gain by the other's merging with me? If he did, he would see and know no more that what I see and know myself; he would merely repeat in himself that want of any issue of itself that characterises my own life. Let him rather remain outside of me, for in that position he can see and know what I myself do not see and do not know from my own place, and he can essentially enrich the event of my own life.' Bakhtin [4, P. 87].

Here we have a rejection of the notion of consensus. As Cheyne and Tarulli noted 'a dialogical mind does not itself constitute a common apperceptive mass, but rather a community of different and often conflicting voices that may not be resolved into one comprehensive self... it is in the struggle with difference and misunderstanding that dialogue and thought are productive and that productivity is not necessarily measured in consensus. Cheyne and Tarulli [11, p. 89].

One of the most important differences to be found between Vygotsky and Bakhtin is then with respect to the 'difference of the other'. For Bakhtin it is through and in difference and misunderstanding in dialogue that the contradictions that generate development are to be found. Vygotsky often seems to be concerned with a ZPD as a space where the learner is brought into the 'knowing' of the other. The emphasis on multiple voices engaged in the construction of a form meaning which is not necessarily located within the individual characterises many current interpretations of Bakhtin's influence on a Vygotskian account.

If the Bakhtinian approach is to some extent, a reasonable model of possible activity within the ZPD we are faced with the prospect of the learner actively making decisions about actions/pathways to progress. At a particular time a learner makes decisions with the benefit (or otherwise) of the influence of others both present and absent. This position opens the way for a non deter-

minist account in which the learner finds a way forward through what may be contradictory influences. This does not deny the possibility of the single voice of influence. There may be times when a learner follows a single path through a ZPD as a diligent apprentice to an all powerful 'master'¹. However this is not a necessary concomitant of the ZPD model:

- the learner's own prior understanding may come into conflict with the support given;
- the learner may receive influence from several conflicting sources.

This speculation on the nature of support within the ZPD raises questions about broader social influences. Multiple and possibly conflicting discourses with different social cultural historical origins may be in play within the ZPD. This view of the ZPD as the nexus of social, cultural, historical influences takes us far beyond the image of the lone learner with the directive and determining tutor. It provides a much expanded view of the 'social' and the possibility of a dialectical conception of interaction within the ZPD. There is a shared understanding in the work of both Bakhtin and Vygotsky that meaning is dependent on the social and historical contexts in which it is made.

Our thought itself-philosophical, scientific, and artistic-is born and shaped in the process of interaction and struggle with others' thought, and this cannot but be reflected in the forms that verbally express our thought as well ... The utterance proves to be a very complex and multiplanar phenomenon if considered not in isolation and with respect to its author (the speaker) only, but as a link in the chain of speech communication and with respect to other, related utterances [5, pp. 92–93].

Wertsch [49] draws on Lotman [28, p. 94] in suggesting that this function is fulfilled best when the codes of the speaker and the listener most completely coincide, which however, he makes clear is rare. In comparison, he returns to Bakhtin's idea of intermediation and Lotman's notion of the text as generative of new meaning, a 'thinking device' [49].

Wertsch and Toma [54] also provide a critique of the conduit model of communication and suggest that either one of the univocal and dialogic functions of texts may tend to become dominant in certain forms of interaction [28; 29]. They draw attention to the way in which the dialogic function involves the generation of new meanings. In extracts from classroom discourse, Wertsch and Toma illustrate the role of the dialogic function by showing how pupils reformulate and reword the words and comments of others as they reject, incorporate, or take further other utterances. They use the term 'interanimate' to refer to the way in which one voice can transform the voice of another in a dialogic encounter. For them this ambiguity of meaning is never finalized and this unfinished character is what Alexandrov, [3] sees as a creative resource rather an irritant noise in the system arguing that it should be seen as resource for communication and of collaboration

In Wertsch's examination of the practice of reciprocal teaching he supports the notion that 'reading involves active, dialogic engagement' [50, p. 130]. Like Bakhtin and Vygotsky, his work assumes that the addressee 'may be temporally, spatially, and socially distant' [49, p. 53]. In his later work Wertsch examines agency from the point of view of the roles that constituents play as revealed through their linguistic expression. His idea of 'discourse referentiality' is helpful in pointing to methods for investigation of communicative acts. This involves consideration of the 'relationship between unique, situated utterances and the contexts in which they occur' and 'how utterances function to presuppose the context of speech in which they occur, on the one hand, or act in a 'performative' capacity to create or entail the context, on the other' [50, p. 95]. Specifically, he addresses issues to do with the presence/accessibility of the writer/reader in the text and reference to characters where their presence is assumed in the text [50]. This accords with Middleton and Brown's [32] understanding of sociocultural studies.

Sociocultural studies of the formation of mind – derived from the work of Vygotsky and Bakhtin – have explored the way in which historicity enters into the organisation of human action. Such work takes as central the assertion that human consciousness is organised within the appropriation, use and generation of culturally evolved resources. These include systems of symbolic representation and communication, artefacts and institutionalised practices for the generation and distribution of knowledge systems [32, p. 102].

Wertsch considers voice and multivoicedness as important dimensions of the sociohistorical context for communication. He explores ideas about given and new information, about knowledge that is not held in common between speakers/writers, and about alterity, intersubjectivity and individual perspectives and how they help to explain how speakers understand or fail to understand each other [49; 50].

"The general point to be made about intersubjectivity and alterity, then, is not that communication is best understood in terms of one or the other in isolation. Instead, virtually every text is viewed as involving both univocal, information-transmission characteristics, and hence intersubjectivity, as well as dialogic, thought-generating tendencies, and hence alterity" [50, p. 117].

Wertsch transcribes several dialogues within teacher-child dyads in an attempt to reveal something of the process whereby the latter appropriates speech genres from the former. Wertsch's [49; 50] research is extremely important, not only for the many concrete illustrations it provides but for the way in which it extends the idea of semiotic mediation to include this notion of 'voice' [17]. It is important to note that this account of voice is a profoundly dialogical notion in which it should be possible to understand the workings of relations of power and control as some voices pre-dominate and others are marginalized and silenced. This

¹ I know of no gender free alternative.

is also a historical analysis in that it seeks to understand the evolution of consciousness through the struggles that are played out in dialogue.

The importance of struggling with another's discourse, its influence in the history of an individual's coming to ideological consciousness, is enormous. One's own discourse and one's own voice, although born of another or dynamically stimulated by another, will sooner or later begin to liberate themselves from the authority of another's discourse. This process is made more complex by the fact that a variety of alien voices enter into the struggle for influence within an individual's consciousness (Just as they struggle with one another in surrounding social reality).

The questions of legitimacy of 'voice' concerning how utterance may be recognised as legitimate and how that utterance signifies and shapes a social position in a field are not always addressed. Wertsch does consider the range of semiotic options open to a speaker and the reasons for choice of one over another and draws on linguistic theories in his examination of how the use of deictic, common and context-informative referents are associated with levels of intersubjectivity [50; 51].

One feature of Vygotsky's theory seldom mentioned is that social speech, especially as it occurs within the zone of proximal development, is rhetorical speech. It is not supplanted by the development of inner or written speech, nor does it vanish on its own once other speech forms develop. To state the obvious, social speech remains a constant and necessary staple of human existence. For that reason, voice, in a rhetorical sense, is realized only in its relationship to, and difference from, other voices that it must address and answer. The quality of voice, in some measure, always presupposes other voices [17, p. 309].

Developmental teaching

There is a danger that notions of dialogic pedagogy may be seen as referring to personal relations and that considerations of conceptual development and knowledge are irrelevant. This could not be further from the truth.

Best [8] traces the changes in the use of the term pedagogy from her perspective as Director of the French Institut National de Recherche Pédagogique. Her discussion starts with the late 19th century definition attributed to Henri Marion:

'Pedagogy is ... both the science and the art of education. But as we must choose one or the other — the (French) language being usually reluctant to allow the same word to denote both an art and its corresponding science - I would simply define pedagogy as the science of education. Why a science rather than an art? Because ... the substance of pedagogy lies much less in the processes that it brings into play than in the theoretical reasoning through which it discovers, evaluates and co-ordinates these processes' quoted in Best [8, p. 154].

Crucially she raises the question as to whether 'pedagogy' conflicts with 'knowledge'. She suggests an early tra-

jectory for common usage of the term from the practical consequences of psychology to the doctrine of non-directive teaching (which she attributes to Carl Rogers), within which pedagogy was seen as 'nothing more than intuition'. Didactics -the study of the relationship between pupils, teachers and the various branches of knowledge grouped into educational subjects — was introduced into French teacher training as a reaction to the diminution of the term pedagogy. In this way she argues that general pedagogy became the philosophy, sociology and social psychology of education and specialised pedagogy became didactics. Jarning (1997) suggests that ambiguities between its part conceptualisation and organisation as a professional field of knowledge on the one hand and as a 'pure' discipline based knowledge field on the other, give rise to possibilities for confusion even within the Scandinavian context where the term is in common use.

Given all this Gallic and Nordic confusion it is hardly surprising that in England, where the very word 'pedagogy' sits unhappily in the mouth — (hard or soft 'g?'), that Brian Simon [38] should ask 'Why no pedagogy in England?'. Simon, as Davies [13] suggests, portrays an explicit relation between the social setting and educational practice:

'Pedagogy involves a vision (theory, set of beliefs) about society, human nature, knowledge and production, in relation to educational ends, with terms and rules inserted as to the practical and mundane means of their realisation' [13, p. 26].

One example of the many formulations of the understanding of the dialectical relations between knowledge and concepts formed in everyday life and concepts that are made available in schooling is to be found in the work of Davydov [14; 15; 16]. He insisted that the tradition of teaching empirical knowledge should be changed to a focus on teaching theoretical knowledge. He developed a 'Developmental Teaching' programme which pursued this goal. The connection between the spontaneous concepts that arise through empirical learning and the scientific concepts that develop through theoretical teaching is seen as the main dimension of the ZPD. The process of 'ascending from the abstract to the concrete' which formed the core of Davydov's early work has been extended by Hedegaard into a conceptualisation of teaching and learning as a 'double move' between situated activity and subject matter concepts. When working within this approach, general laws are used by teachers to formulate instruction and children investigate the manifestations of these general laws in carefully chosen examples which embody core concepts. These core concepts constitute the 'germ cell' for subsequent learning. In practical activity children grapple with central conceptual relations which underpin particular phenomena. In this way the teaching focuses directly on the scientific concepts that constitute the Hedegaard [19] suggests that 'the teacher guides the learning activity both from the perspective of general concepts and from the perspective of engaging students in 'situated' problems that are meaningful in relation to their developmental stage and life situations' [19, p. 120]. Her account makes it clear that successful applications of this approach are possible, while indicating the enormous

amount of work that will be required if such practices are to become both routine and effective

The importance of the interplay between the scientific concepts derived in theoretical learning and the spontaneous concepts formed in empirical learning is central to this account of development. If the two forms do not 'connect' then true concept development does not take place. Thus theoretically driven content based teaching which is not designed to connect with learners' everyday empirical learning will remain inert and developmentally ineffective.

As Hedegaard and Chaiklin [20] remind us, this body of work identifies the general developmental potential of particular forms of teaching as well as its specific micro-genetic function. The assertion is that teaching should promote general mental development as well as the acquisition of special abilities and knowledge.

Good teaching develops a capacity for relating to problems in a theoretical way, and to reflect on one's thinking. Davydov develops an extensive analysis of theoretical knowledge grounded in a materialist-dialectical philosophy. This concept contrasts with the concept of knowledge and thinking used by the cognitive and Piagetian traditions because it emphasises that knowledge is constituted by the relations between the object of knowledge and other objects, rather than some essential properties or characteristics that define the object Hedegaard, and Chaiklin [20, p. 153].

Ivic [22] also insists that Vygotsky's emphasis was not on the transmission and acquisition of a body of information alone. Vygotsky was concerned with the provision through education, of the tools, techniques and intellectual operations that would facilitate development. He was critical of many forms of education that seemed to remain content with the transmission of knowledge. Ivic argued that schools do not always teach systems of knowledge but in many cases overburden learners with isolated and meaningless facts [22, p. 434].

Conclusion

The Russian word *obuchenie* is often translated as *instruction*. The cultural baggage of a transmission based pedagogy is easily associated with *obuchenie* in its guise

as *instruction*. Davydov's [16] translator suggests that teaching or teaching-learning is more appropriate as the translation of *obuchenie* in that it refers to all the actions of the teacher in engendering cognitive development and growth. Sutton [39] also notes that the word does not admit to a direct English translation. He argues that it means both teaching and learning, and refers to both sides of the two-way process, and is therefore well suited to a dialectical view of a phenomenon made up of mutually interpenetrating opposites.

The issue at hand here is the suggestion that dialogic interaction between teacher and learners (as opposed to a knowledge transmission approach to teaching) is necessary if 'instruction' is to give rise to cognitive development which is best characterized as a dialectical process. Depending on the history of their development and their social positioning in the discourses of the classroom, different learners may be in need of different forms of dialogic exchange if they are to make progress. Here lies the slippery dilemma for the teacher. It lies in the tension between some form of direction through dialogue and a recognition that some forms of direction from the teacher may lead to inappropriate understanding on the part of the learner. The teacher is constantly the learner who is trying to understand the consequences of the teaching they practice. This is hard enough and the challenge is compounded in the diversity of dialogic exchanges which typify a classroom. Resort to transmission based pedagogies as a retreat from the demands of 'obuchenie' is not the answer if democratic solutions to mass education are sought. It is well known that some learners come to school well prepared to manage ineffective instruction. They would benefit much more from dialogic engagement with their teachers' understanding of the world and those who not suitably prepared to manage inappropriate instruction would be given genuine opportunities to learn.

At the heart of the Vygotskian understanding of *obuchenie* is a dialogic conception of pedagogy which encompasses not only a dialectical understanding of the social relations of schooling but also of conceptual development. Both aspects present educators with significant challenges.

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Выготский и диалогическая педагогика

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В статье рассматриваются различия между понятиями «диалогический» и «диалектический» и следствия этих различий для педагогической практики. Вместе с этим предлагается более широкая трактовка представлений Выготского об опосредствовании в рамках учебных отношений. Модель взаимного влияния субъекта и социальной ситуации рассматривается как ключевой момент диалогической концепции обучения в педагогике, подразумевающей диалектический характер не только социальных отношений в школьной среде, но и процесса развития понятийного мышления. Утверждается, что реализация этой концепции на практике представляет определенные сложности для педагогов. Тем не менее, попытки избежать повышенных требований, предъявляемых концепцией обучения, и использовать педагогические практики, основанные на передаче знаний, умений и навыков, не могут рассматриваться как демократический способ решения проблемы массового образования. Известно, что некоторые ученики приходят в школу достаточно подготовленными для того, чтобы справляться с неэффективным обучением. Они могли бы существенно выиграть от вовлечения в диалог с учителем касательно устройства мира, а те, кто недостаточно подготовлен, открыли бы тем самым для себя новые пути для научения.

Ключевые слова: диалогический, диалектический, опосредствование, обучение, Выготский.

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