



Professor Brian Edmiston, The Ohio State University, USA

Using positioning theory and dialogism in researching teaching and learning



Brian Edmiston has been researching his own and others' teaching and learning with drama since he studied for his masters degree in England thirty years ago with the legendary educator, Dorothy Heathcote. Born in Ireland, and a former secondary teacher of English and Drama in the U.K. and primary teacher in the U.S., Dr. Edmiston has authored or coauthored over forty publications, including four books. His scholarship, which focuses on drama in literacy, language, and literature teaching, dramatic inquiry as a cross-curricular pedagogy, and drama as ethical education, is informed, in particular, by Vygotskian sociocultural theory and the dialogism of Bakhtin.

This seminar will explore the significance for educational research of two interrelated conceptual frameworks.

Positioning theory (Harré & Langenhove, 1998) provides a way of understanding how and why in different social situations, as people dialogue and engage in discursive practices, they take up differing reciprocal social positions that affect how they communicate with and take act in relation to other people. When the social and cultural dimensions of teaching and learning are valued, social positioning is understood as affecting learning and development because positioning is part of the dynamic that shapes classroom social relationships and, over time, the social identities of teachers and students. Dialogism lies at the heart of Mikhail Bakhtin's theories of language, literature, consciousness, and creating understanding. Bakhtin theorises that people create meaning and shape their understanding dialogically as they dialogue not just with other people but with other perspectives and consciousnesses that may be experienced both externally in face-to-face interactions and internally as inner speech including during reading or remembering.

DATE/TIME: Thursday 13 February 2014, 10–11.30am

VENUE: TT1.12 (McLaren Room), Faculty of Education, University of Waikato, Hamilton

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