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Konstantin Stanislavski vs. Bertolt Brecht**

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A Comparative Analysis of Brian Way and Dorothy Heathcote's Theatrical Approaches: Konstantin Stanislavski vs. Bertolt Brecht

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Abstract

This study conducts a comparative analysis of the theatrical approaches of Brian Way and Dorothy Heathcote, two seminal figures in drama education. While both emerged from the United Kingdom, their philosophies have had enduring international impact. Using qualitative document analysis, the research examined authoritative texts within the discipline, coding data thematically to identify convergences and divergences. Findings indicate that Way's model, grounded in humanistic psychology and influenced by Stanislavski, prioritises individual growth, experiential learning, and self-actualisation. In contrast, Heathcote, shaped by Brechtian theatre and critical pedagogy, emphasises alienation techniques and social transformation. The analysis highlights how these theatrical approaches cannot be separated from their broader philosophical and educational contexts. It is concluded that relational and comparative methodologies hold significant potential for advancing research quality, teacher professional development, and curriculum innovation in drama education.

Keywords: Way, Heathcote, Stanislavski, Brecht

Introduction

The origins of the historical development of the field referred to as drama in education, creative drama, or simply drama, are attributed to the work of a village schoolteacher, Harriet Finlay-Johnson, conducted at a village school in Sompting (Adigüzel 2019). These practices were designed as a process aimed at teaching subjects within the curriculum through a method Finlay-Johnson termed the ‘dramatic method.’ Another pioneer from the same period, Caldwell Cook, was also a teacher; however, the educational context in which Cook worked differed from Finlay-Johnson’s in both socio-cultural and socio-economic terms. Cook was employed as an English teacher at a college. Like Finlay-Johnson, Cook also applied drama for instructional purposes. During this period, the innovative approaches of Finlay-Johnson and Cook were observed by many teachers; however, when these teachers returned to their own classrooms and attempted to implement what they had witnessed, their failure led to the attribution of Cook’s and Johnson’s success to their exceptional teaching abilities (Bolton 2007:48). In other words, a prevailing view emerged that the approaches of Cook and Johnson were not replicable by others. Additionally, one of the reasons for the limited dissemination of their approaches can be attributed to the prejudices developed at the time against drama lessons. Drama classes were often perceived as chaotic environments lacking classroom management (Taylor 2020). It is not surprising that Finlay-Johnson and Cook, as the earliest pioneers of classroom dramatisation in England, wrote about the educational value of drama in a manner that was passionate, optimistic, romantic, and often emotional. It has been suggested that the entire Progressive movement in education, within the conditions of that historical period, was characterised by a search that went beyond the mere call for ‘freedom’ and ‘individuality,’ representing a quest for an alternative to ugliness, moral decay, and industrialism, as well as a means of escaping the harsh realities of war (Bolton 1997: 13).

This early period can be described as a phase in which the pioneers of drama applied it primarily as a tool for instruction, engaged in dramatisation-focused practices, and had not yet developed a mature theatrical approach. Courtney (1989) argues that early drama practice was limited to pedagogical forms of dramatisation rather than the more mature dimensions of theatrical performance. Slade (1954) highlights that dramatisation in this period primarily functioned as a means of children’s self-expression and had not yet achieved theatrical maturity. Way (1967) positioned drama principally as a pedagogical tool for personal development, emphasising its instructional dimension. Similarly, Bolton (1979) underlines that, from pioneers such as Johnson and Cook onwards, approaches to drama were largely dramatisation-based and oriented toward educational purposes. Following the innovative pedagogical initiatives of Johnson and Cook, the two World Wars influenced the development of drama in both divergent and convergent ways. The influence was convergent in the sense that the massive destruction caused by the wars prompted a radical critique of Enlightenment positivism—essentially, a critique of reason itself—particularly through the Frankfurt School. Enlightenment thought posits that humanity and civilization continually progress toward improvement when compared to previous historical periods, offering a linear understanding of time and history

centred on Progressivism. However, it is evident that the Frankfurt School, particularly in its critique of modernity and rationality, associated scientific and technological advancement with the collapse of the intellectual foundations of our civilisation (Horkheimer 1993). According to Horkheimer (1993), science, having sharply separated itself from philosophy and evolved into a well-defined field of specialisation, has nearly relinquished its privilege of addressing the most fundamental problems of human existence.

One of the critiques that emerged following the two World Wars was that mass ideologies had been a contributing factor to the devastation experienced. Therefore, it can be argued that the educational paradigm of the period shifted its focus toward cultivating individuals who were more libertarian and individualistic. John Dewey may be considered the most influential and widely followed educational theorist of this era. Dewey developed a unique, comprehensive, and coherent educational theory that left a significant mark on the 20th century and substantially shaped educational reform in primary schools not only in the United States but also across Europe and Asia. This theory, which promoted a child-centred approach to education, was based on several core principles: that education is a vital necessity which reconstructs and sustains individual experience; that school is an embryonic form of community life and a vehicle for social change and progress; and that activity is the most essential feature of the child's nature, serving as an expression of their instincts, experiences, and individuality (Elena & Suzana 2016). The concepts proposed by Dewey for education—such as freedom, individuality, and activity—also found resonance in the approaches of leading drama educators of the period, namely Peter Slade and Brian Way. Within the field of drama, a discernible influence is observed beginning from the post–World War II years through to the late 1970s, starting with Peter Slade and continuing with Brian Way. This period may be characterised as one emphasising personal or individual development through drama. This is clearly reflected in the title of Way's book *Development Through Drama*. In his understanding of drama, Way is seen to draw upon psychology, education, and theatre. Specifically, he was influenced by the then-prevalent school of Humanistic Psychology (notably Rogers and Maslow) in the field of psychology, by Dewey in education, and by Stanislavski in theatre. Key concepts in his approach include 'experience over academic instruction,' 'learning by doing,' 'the individual over the group,' as well as 'individuality,' 'uniqueness,' 'freedom,' 'personal development,' 'the cultivation of the whole person,' and 'self-actualisation.' It can be stated that Way adapted Stanislavski's approach to actor training, which focused on affective memory, into a developmental model called 'The Circle of the Seven Facets of Personality,' thereby establishing a drama approach centred on personal growth. Within his drama framework—built upon the uniqueness and individuality of the person (Metinnam & Adıgüzel 2016)—Way employed these drama techniques to activate participants, help them feel free, act spontaneously, and develop creative abilities.

Dorothy Heathcote, who began to gain increasing prominence toward the end of the 1970s and would go on to leave a lasting impact on the field of drama through her contributions and the approaches she introduced, employed these drama techniques not to grant freedom to the participant immediately, but rather to first cultivate a

sense of responsibility through role-taking (Wagner 1976). Heathcote positioned drama as a form of inquiry into human dilemmas, not as therapy nor pure play. The teacher's role was to structure the learning situation so that meaning could be negotiated within a shared fiction (Bolton 1992). The key aspect that distinguishes Heathcote's understanding of drama from that of Slade and Way lies in the negotiation of meaning between teacher and student within a jointly constructed fiction. It can be argued that Heathcote introduced a paradigm shift in the field of drama. Her pedagogical foundations can be traced to Vygotsky's theory of the zone of proximal development (Vygotsky & Cole 1978) and Freire's dialogical pedagogy (Freire 1996), while her theatrical source of influence is Brecht's concept of epic theatre (Brecht 1974). In addition, it may be stated that Heathcote approached the drama process not from a psychological foundation, but from a sociological and anthropological perspective (Courtney 1989). Heathcote's influence by symbolic interactionists—particularly Erving Goffman, who gained prominence in the 1970s—and her interpretation of Goffman's ideas on the framing of everyday experience within her own conceptual framework reveal the presence of a sociological lens in her work (Goffman 1974). Moreover, the dialogical approach she adopted from Freire contributed to the creation of a learning environment that transcended the teacher–learner dichotomy and was characterised by democratic, pluralist, and intensive interaction. It is likely that Heathcote's technique of teacher-in-role was influenced by Vygotsky's theory of the zone of proximal development. Like Piaget, Vygotsky conceptualised human development in stages and identified specific skill sets for each stage. However, unlike Piaget, Vygotsky asserted that with appropriate adult or peer guidance, an individual could reach a more advanced level of the skill set associated with their developmental stage. In this context, it may be argued that Heathcote's teacher-in-role, who engages the participant in the negotiation of meaning through dramatic conflict, aims to provide guidance that enables participants to push the boundaries of their own capacities. Beyond functioning as a facilitative technique, teacher-in-role also operates as a form of scaffolding within the learner's zone of proximal development (Vygotsky & Cole 1978), allowing students to progress beyond their immediate capabilities. At the same time, it embodies Freire's (1996) conception of the teacher as a co-investigator, positioning teacher and participants as equal partners in the creation of meaning. This dual role not only encourages risk-taking and challenge but also fosters empathy, social responsibility, and critical reflection. By embodying roles within a shared fiction, the teacher-in-role provides learners with a safe yet dynamic rehearsal space in which to experiment with social identities, ethical choices, and democratic participation. Thus, Heathcote's innovation can be seen as both a pedagogical method of guidance and a transformative practice of education for citizenship.

Building upon this historical overview of drama education, it becomes evident that the contributions of pioneers such as Johnson, Cook, Slade, Way, and Heathcote not only shaped distinctive practices but also reflected divergent theoretical and philosophical orientations. While Johnson and Cook initiated drama as a pedagogical method within the classroom, Slade and Way foregrounded the role of drama in fostering individuality and personal development. Heathcote, in turn, introduced a paradigmatic shift by emphasising drama as a process of inquiry grounded in social,

political, and critical dimensions. These trajectories reveal a complex interplay between theatrical methodologies and educational ideologies across different historical periods. To address the ambiguities that persist in the literature regarding these orientations, the present study focuses specifically on the comparative analysis of Way and Heathcote, whose contrasting yet influential approaches continue to inform contemporary understandings of drama education.

One of the reasons cited for the lack of theoretical and critical perspectives in the field of drama is that the discipline has historically been preoccupied with developing a strong tradition of practice as a method of instruction. This focus has led to the persistence of a set of unexamined beliefs and practices that underpin much of the management, traditions, knowledge, and operations of drama within educational contexts (Finneran 2008). Addressing this issue may be possible through the undertaking of critical and comparative studies on the historical development of drama.

Within this study, particular emphasis is placed on the theatrical approaches of Brian Way and Dorothy Heathcote, whose contributions represent two distinct yet influential paradigms in drama education. Way, drawing upon Stanislavski's system of inner action and informed by humanistic psychology, framed drama as a means of experiential learning, privileging individual growth and self-actualisation. Heathcote, by contrast, profoundly influenced by Brechtian theatre and critical pedagogy, positioned drama as a form of inquiry into social dilemmas, privileging collective meaning-making and social transformation. Highlighting these orientations at the outset not only clarifies the central focus of the present research but also situates the subsequent analysis within the broader interplay between theatrical methodology, educational philosophy, and historical development.

The present study aims to explore certain ambiguities in the literature regarding these theatrical approaches, particularly in relation to the historical positions of Way and Heathcote within the development of drama. To this end, the approaches of Way and Heathcote have been compared: primarily in terms of their theatrical orientations, but also with regard to their educational and philosophical foundations. The study seeks to answer the following research questions:

What is the relationship between the theatrical approaches that constitute a part of Brian Way's and Dorothy Heathcote's understandings of drama?

How are the theatrical approaches of Brian Way and Dorothy Heathcote related to their respective educational and philosophical orientations?

Aims and Significance

The aim of this study is to provide a critical and comparative analysis of the theatrical approaches of Brian Way and Dorothy Heathcote in order to illuminate how their distinct orientations have shaped the theory and practice of drama education. By

situating Way's focus on individual growth and experiential learning alongside Heathcote's emphasis on collective inquiry and social transformation, the research seeks to clarify both the divergences and the commonalities between these two seminal figures. The significance of this study lies in its contribution to filling a notable gap in the literature, where the theatrical underpinnings of Way's and Heathcote's pedagogical models are often acknowledged but rarely examined in systematic comparison. In doing so, the study not only deepens our understanding of drama's theoretical foundations but also offers insights into its continuing relevance for contemporary educational contexts, particularly in relation to curriculum innovation, teacher professional development, and the promotion of critical, reflective, and participatory learning environments.

Methodology

Research Design

This study aims to examine the philosophical and educational foundations of two distinct traditions in drama by focusing on the theatrical perspectives of two pioneers in the field: Brian Way and Dorothy Heathcote. The research was designed as a qualitative study based on document analysis. Document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating printed and electronic (computer-based and internet-transmitted) materials.

Like other analytical methods in qualitative research, document analysis requires the examination and interpretation of data in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge (Corbin & Strauss 2008; cited in Rapley 2007; Bowen 2009).

While document analysis is widely acknowledged as a rigorous and systematic research strategy, one critique is that it may rely heavily on the availability and accessibility of documents, which can at times restrict the breadth of interpretation (Bowen 2009). However, this limitation is often balanced by the method's strength in enabling the researcher to revisit and reinterpret established materials within a new analytical frame. In drama education research, document analysis has been previously adopted in studies examining curricular developments (e.g., Adıgüzel 2019), the historical trajectory of drama practices (e.g., Bolton 2007), and evaluations of critical myths in drama as education (e.g., Finneran 2008).

The documents available for systematic review within a study can take various forms. These include advertisements; agendas, attendance records, and meeting minutes; manuals; background documents; books and brochures; diaries and journals; event programmes (printed outlines); letters and memoranda; maps and charts; newspapers (clippings/articles); press releases; programme proposals, application forms, and summaries; radio and television programme scripts; organisational or institutional reports; survey data; and various public records. Notebooks and photo albums may also serve as documentary material for research purposes. Such documents can be found in libraries, newspaper archives, historical society offices,

and institutional files. Previous studies in the literature may also be included in document analysis (Bowen 2009).

In this study, it was considered that the theatrical approaches of the two pioneers could be compared more effectively by examining books, articles, and theses written about them, as well as by applying prepared audio-visual materials.

Data Collection Tools and Data Collection

In this study, printed, auditory, and visual documents related to Brian Way and Dorothy Heathcote were examined primarily to compare their theatrical approaches and, more specifically, to analyse the components of their work that relate to these approaches. Particular attention was paid to ensuring that the documents reviewed were valid and reliable sources. For instance, peer-reviewed journal articles and approved graduate theses were considered within this scope.

The documents were accessed through multiple channels, including university libraries, national and institutional archives, and recognised academic databases such as Taylor & Francis, JSTOR, ProQuest, Researchgate and Google Scholar. In addition, materials were obtained from publicly available digital repositories, professional association records, and, where relevant, audio-visual archives containing interviews, conference proceedings, and documentary material. This approach ensured both the credibility of the sources and the breadth of perspectives included in the analysis.

Data Analysis

The data collected through document analysis were analysed using the descriptive analysis technique. In descriptive analysis, the data obtained are summarised and interpreted according to pre-determined themes (Yıldırım & Şimşek, 2013). Since the theatrical approaches of the two pioneers had already been established as the primary theme for the data analysis in this study, the extracted data were categorised according to sub-themes such as theatrical influences, educational orientations, and philosophical foundations. For example, references to Way's emphasis on individual growth and humanistic psychology were coded under the theme of 'personal development,' whereas Heathcote's engagement with Brechtian theatre and critical pedagogy were coded under the theme of 'social critique and transformation.' A worked example of this coding process is provided in Appendix A in order to illustrate the analytical procedure more concretely.

While descriptive analysis is widely employed for organising and presenting qualitative data in a structured manner, it has also been critiqued for its tendency to remain at the level of surface description without offering deeper theoretical interpretation (Miles & Huberman 1994; Sandelowski 2000). In drama education research, however, the method has been adopted effectively in studies exploring historical perspectives (Bolton 2007), methodological discussions of drama as pedagogy and research (Wagner 2002; Norris 2016) and applied in doctoral research on drama with persons with disabilities (Richard 1992).

In the present study, descriptive analysis was deemed appropriate given the aim of comparing and contrasting the theatrical approaches of Way and Heathcote across historical, pedagogical, and philosophical dimensions, while ensuring transparency in the organisation of data.

Findings

Theatrical Approaches as a Component of Way's and Heathcote's Understanding of Drama

In drama processes, content and context hold significant importance. However, throughout different periods in the history of drama, these two elements have been used in ways that imply different meanings. In his book *The Drama Classroom*, Taylor (2020) describes the drama teacher of the 1970s as someone who predominantly engaged children in emotional and concentration exercises (content), with the intention that these activities would later form the foundation for dramatisations in subsequent stages (also content). He notes that the dramatisations of this period were generally linked to everyday life experiences (context), in line with Dewey's educational philosophy. Such exercises were typically designed to activate the participant's sensory memory, bringing forth experiences that could then be embodied in movements and actions within the drama workshop. In other words, these practices were aligned with the early phase of Stanislavski's acting system, which emphasised the interplay between inner and outer actions. Taylor (2020:110) exemplifies this through embodied imagery and guided breathing exercises that move from relaxation into tension and release:

Focus on your breathing... imagine you are lying on a beach... the sun grows hotter... you are chained... now, the chains are broken—relax.

This instructional approach aligns closely with Way's pedagogical practice. Similarly, Way (1967:103) employs spatial metaphors of restriction and release, asking participants to imagine themselves

inside an upside-down jar... press gently against the glass... until you are free enough to push further.

Both examples demonstrate how imaginative embodiment and physical awareness are harnessed to cultivate dramatic engagement and personal transformation.

The theatrical foundations of Way's drama approach reveal the influence of Stanislavski, particularly in the emphasis on inner experience and external action. In particular, the warm-up exercises employed in his sessions aim to stimulate sensory memory in order to generate inner action and subsequently transform this inner action into outer action. For instance, when the heat of the sand on a beach is emphasised, the participant is expected to recall and physically experience this sensation by drawing on their own affective memory. The excessive heat of the sand

and the participants' jumping movements upon it can be interpreted as the conversion of inner action into outer action. Furthermore, elements from what is considered the second phase of Stanislavski's acting methodology—namely, physical action analysis—can also be observed in Way's practice. Notably, the concept of the 'magic if' is frequently employed in improvisations that relate to everyday life. Bolton (2007) also characterises Way's approach as one that reactivates sensory memory and reproduces everyday life experiences through mimetic activities, in accordance with Dewey's educational philosophy. In general terms, it can be stated that Way (1967:13) adapted Stanislavski's acting model to create his own framework, known as the 'Circle of the Seven Facets of Personality.' In this way, a model originally designed for actor training was adapted and employed within drama for the purpose of personal development. Bolton (1997) highlights St. Denis, Viola Spolin, and Konstantin Stanislavski as key influences on Way. He particularly emphasises that Way 'cast Stanislavski's approach into an educational mould.' In contrast, Dorothy Heathcote developed her own approach under the influence of Bertolt Brecht. It may be argued that the concepts of *alienation* and *distance* were central to Heathcote's process. These notions are also foundational to the new theatrical aesthetics articulated by Brecht, who initially referred to his model as *epic theatre* but later considered the term overly formalistic, subsequently adopting the designation *dialectical theatre* to emphasise its critical and materialist underpinnings (Brecht 1974: 281–282).

The theatrical model that Brecht sought to construct was conceived as an alternative to dramatic theatre. Brecht aimed to break the illusionistic experience evoked in the spectator by dramatic theatre, thereby fostering a critical perspective focused on the message of the play. To achieve this, and as articulated by Benjamin (2014), Brecht found it necessary to decelerate the flow of dramatic action. Accordingly, he developed alienation techniques that were intended to create a certain critical distance, enabling the audience to observe the action from a detached perspective. For instance, the use of a narrator in Brecht's plays can be seen as an attempt to break the illusion by replacing the dialogic 'I–you' language of dramatic theatre with the 'they–there' language of epic theatre. In this way, the actor demonstrates what is happening on stage, thereby encouraging the audience to focus on the intended message. Heathcote's approach introduced the concept of *living through drama* alongside *learning through drama* and *personal development through drama*. The term *living through drama* is associated most often with her work, particularly her early period also referred to as *Man in a Mess*. An article Heathcote originally published in 1969, in which she states that '*drama means "living through"*', is considered the source of the name of the approach (Bethlenfalvy 2020:23). Heathcote engages with the content by entering into and stepping out of role within a fictional context; in other words, she incorporates both herself and the participants into the dramatic roles. This is the way she steps into role and participates in the drama together with the children. Working with teacher-in-role and the whole group together has also been considered a central element of *living through drama* (Bethlenfalvy 2020:23). This implies experiencing the topic within an improvised, here-and-now structure of a fictional world. During this process, participants are encouraged to view the content from a certain distance and with a critical perspective. As Bethlenfalvy (2020:28) notes:

through stopping the situation and stepping in and out of the fiction the participants get the opportunity to see themselves in it from the outside. The reflection makes them aware of the different layers of being in a fictional situation and more importantly distances them from it.

Thus, the teacher's entry into role facilitates participants' transition into the fictional world, while the discussions held upon stepping out of role enable participants to critically evaluate what they have done in role from a distanced, reflective standpoint. During this process, participants are encouraged to view the content from a certain distance and with a critical perspective. Heathcote (1984) conceptualised this through *self-spectatorship* as '*the least pure*' situation, whereby participants both live through the dramatic moment and simultaneously observe themselves within it. In this respect, her work resonates with Goffman's (2020) notion of performance in which the actor is at once performer and observer of their own actions. This dual positioning also connects with Brecht's emphasis on the spectator's *degree of selectivity*: the capacity to choose what to notice and how to interpret events within a performance. A pedagogical condition that echoes Brecht's 'dual viewer' and operationalises Heathcote's use of techniques such as *teacher-in-role* and *frame distance*. Taken together, these perspectives suggest that Heathcote's drama not only cultivates immersive engagement but also structures opportunities for critical reflection, positioning the participant as actor, audience, and analyst at once.

Heathcote's theatrical approach, much like that of Brian Way, was shaped by the educational and philosophical foundations of her own understanding of drama. For Heathcote, however, drama is a collective enterprise, 'collective' in more than one sense. The class as a whole, often huddled in a tight group on the floor or sitting in a cluster of chairs in front of a blackboard, is invited to make skeletal decisions about the choice of topic for the drama (Bolton 2007:53). From this perspective, it can be argued that in the drama process proposed by Heathcote, participants enter into an intensive interaction with one another, thereby engaging in a collective process of meaning-making. It can be argued that Heathcote occupied a pedagogically critical position, aiming to foster an environment that not only targeted social change and transformation but also encouraged participants to engage in intensive interaction and learn from one another on an individual level. In this respect, it may be stated that she shifted the drama process from a psychological basis toward a more sociological and anthropological orientation. The comparison of Way's and Heathcote's approaches with a focus on the concept of 'distance' is presented in the figure below:

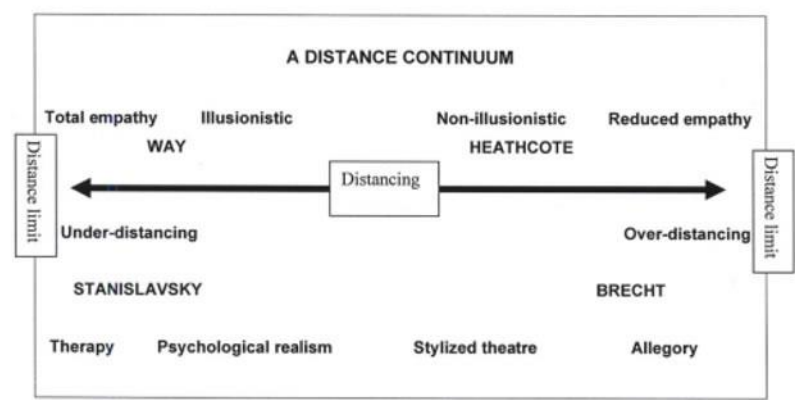


Figure 1. Way’s and Heathcote’s Perspectives on the Brechtian Concept of ‘Distance’ (Eriksson 2009)

The Relationship Between Way’s and Heathcote’s Educational and Philosophical Approaches and Their Theatrical Approaches

The theatrical approaches that constitute a part of Way’s and Heathcote’s understandings of drama should not be regarded as isolated or arbitrary choices. Rather, it can be stated that the educational and philosophical approaches underpinning their respective understandings of drama directly influenced the integration of these theatrical models into their broader drama practices. A classification proposed by Eriksson (2007)—inspired by the works of Norwegian drama pioneer John Lilletvedt (1970) and German researcher Ute Pinkert (2007), which adapts different educational program philosophies to drama traditions—may be useful in illustrating the roots of these pioneers’ theatrical approaches:

Development-Oriented Model	Dialogue-Oriented Model
Personal Development-Oriented	Personally Interested, Originality-Oriented
Activity-Based, Experience-Driven Education	Dialogue-Based, Problem-Solving Approach
Learning by Doing and Experiencing	Learning Based on the Discovery of Knowledge
Teacher as “Gardener”	Teacher as “Participant”
Romanticism / Child-Centredness	Existentialism / Value-Centeredness
Libertarian	Interactive
The World as Something to Be Discovered	The World as Something to Be Questioned
Pioneers: Ward, McCaslin, Slade, Way	Pioneers: Heathcote, Bolton, O’Toole

Table 1. Programme Development Models of Way and Heathcote

In this classification, it is also possible to observe the pioneers’ differing perceptions of life and how these differences are reflected in their practices. The development-oriented model reflects a more romantic, introspective perspective that prioritises

individuality and difference, while the dialogue-oriented model represents a more extroverted, collectivist perspective that emphasises shared perceptions of the external world. The development-oriented model is concerned with personal growth, freedom, originality, and the emergence of creativity. It also advocates for learners to engage in activities independently, with the teacher assuming a limited role in the educational process. The 'gardener' metaphor, in this context, is a popular representation of American philosopher John Dewey's philosophy of 'learning by doing and experiencing.' The roots of the development-oriented model lie in a synthesis of Romanticism and an approach that equips the child with enduring skills through practical learning (Eriksson 2007).

The essence of the development-oriented model, in which Way is also included, is based on the idea that the participant is left free, and the drama educator's intervention in the process is kept minimal. This means that the participant is expected to reach a conclusion on their own through the given instructions. During this process, the educator should not interfere with the participant's process of acquiring knowledge. The educator is likened to a gardener who is responsible for providing the necessary conditions and infrastructure for the plants in their garden to grow.

According to Taylor (2000):

Ward and Way proposed that the teacher guide the drama experience or direct it from the outside. Slade, on the other hand, viewed the teacher more as a facilitator of a session in which children play. In this process, the teacher would again assume the role of a facilitator from a non-participatory perspective. Slade argued that any form of intervention in the child's play or interruption of their play would ruin and destroy the child's creativity.

Brian Way, who described drama as 'a way of life' (Eriksson 2007:7), articulated this practice-based understanding as follows:

Drama plays a significant role in enabling anyone to apply the practices of daily life in a simple and confident manner. Because it is based directly on experience and practice (Eriksson 2007:287).

In other words, Way articulates his views by defining drama as 'a rehearsal for life.' This is because he argues that drama enables the individual to act more effectively in everyday life by simulating possible daily situations that may be encountered. According to Taylor (2020), although there are other branches in the genealogy of drama, considering the impact they left behind, the contributions of Ward, Slade, and Way are as important and guiding as traffic signs on roads. Each of these authors presented a particular perspective on drama and attributed pedagogical functions to it that are positioned precisely in contrast to those proposed by Dorothy Heathcote.

The ideas of drama pioneers who advocated a development-oriented model concerning the role of the educator within the process became a significant basis for the formation of Heathcote's own approach. She opposed an understanding

constructed around an idea of play that is untouchable, uninterrupted, free, and spontaneously unfolding, and instead advocated for a planned structure within drama processes that would enable deep thinking (Taylor 2020). The drama lesson is structured in the context of the student's development of a decision-making mechanism regarding taking responsibility (cited in Hesten 1993; Özen 2018). Heathcote considered the preceding pioneers' focus on the participant and the unlimited freedom granted to them as pedagogically flawed. These pioneers held the belief that by providing participants with various drama exercises, they could allow them to uncover their own creativity independently. Therefore, Heathcote was insistent that teachers should structure the techniques they used in drama processes in ways that would prompt participants to question their experiences. In a similar vein, Neelands & Goode (2015) examined how techniques could be employed to structure a drama process—that is, to create the fictional context, to develop the dramatic narrative, and to facilitate the articulation of reflection. One of the key techniques she employed to achieve this was the 'Teacher-in-Role' strategy (Taylor 2020).

The emergence and widespread use of this technique marked a significant moment when Heathcote began fundamentally transforming the prevailing understandings of drama before her. This is because the technique opened to debate the roles of the two most important components of drama—participant and educator—as they had been conceived in earlier drama traditions.

According to Bolton (1984), in contrast to Way's often-cited notion of 'the individuality of the individual,' which emphasised differences between people, Heathcote focused on 'similarities' and 'commonalities,' believing that these concepts better captured the essence of drama. Furthermore, she shifted drama away from the influence of symbolic psychology toward a perspective rooted in anthropology. According to Norris (1993), what distinguished Heathcote from the early romantic child drama movement in England, which positioned children at the centre, was her framing of drama within a dialectical structure aimed at enabling children to learn from one another. 'The mutual negotiation of meaning' was a recurring motif across much of her work.

For example, consider a drama workshop on the topic of gender. In a romantic approach, it would be sufficient for everyone in the circle to express themselves creatively using drama techniques. Each individual expression would be important for that person's own personal enlightenment. If the same topic were addressed in a Heathcote workshop, however, the meaning of gender would need to be discussed and negotiated among the group members. According to Bolton (1984), early romantic child drama was a tradition based on variations of the symbolic meanings of the circle (such as equality, freedom, wholeness).

The circle was seen as a shared bond among a group of people. For Slade, the circle was a symbol in which every child stood at the centre. Each child, throughout the process, possessed their own individual circle. The symbolism of the circle is also evident in Way's approach. He, too, based his approach on a kind of circle symbolism. From this point onward, the development-oriented model—centred on individual growth and uniqueness, and rooted in psychological symbolism—gradually evolved

into a model characterised by sociological and anthropological qualities, where social interaction and the negotiation of meaning derived from the topic addressed in drama became central. This newly emerging model, which is systematically planned and aims to foster deep and critical thinking as well as to create a context for collective social learning by the end of the process, has been referred to as the dialogue-based model. The origins of this model can be traced back to the 'Socratic Method' of the Ancient Greek philosopher Socrates. The Socratic Method is generally regarded as a form of inquiry based on dialogue. This feature makes it particularly relevant to drama approaches that prioritise knowledge acquisition through discovery (Eriksson 2007). As illustrated in the table above, the development-oriented model views the world as a mysterious place full of surprises to be discovered, whereas the dialogue-based model perceives the world as a place that must be questioned and transformed through critical inquiry.

The understanding held by the British drama pioneers Gavin Bolton and Dorothy Heathcote closely aligns with this perspective. The title of one of the chapters in Bolton's 1979 book, *Towards a Theory of Drama in Education*, 'Some implications of drama for understanding', is a deliberate reference to Brian Way's *Development Through Drama*. By choosing this chapter title, Bolton implies that the focus within the field of drama has fundamentally shifted (Eriksson, 2007). Drama would now serve less as a vehicle for development and more as a means for understanding: less as a psychologically grounded learning environment and more as a space for the negotiated exploration of meaning around the issues addressed through drama. The drama teacher, like the teacher of any other subject, must accept responsibility for what takes place during the lesson, since what is learned will inevitably be shaped by the teacher's choices, whether conscious or unconscious, and by underlying philosophies and attitudes towards pupils and the subject. Traditionally, this responsibility has meant that teachers select activities, transmit knowledge, foster skills, and maintain standards of behaviour. However, in drama, the teacher's primary function is not merely to instruct or pass on a fixed body of knowledge, but rather to create potential spaces for learning in which pupils can actively participate (O'Neill & Lambert 1982:21). As pupils are encouraged to assume greater responsibility for their own learning, the conventional hierarchy between teacher and student begins to shift towards a more balanced and equal relationship. This reorientation aligns with the dialogue-based model, which contrasts with the development-oriented approach by granting both teacher and students equal authority in decision-making. Within such a model, power relations are tied not to individuals but to the topic under exploration; hierarchy is displaced from the facilitator or participant, and instead the focus rests on how the chosen topic is interrogated and discussed.

For instance, in a drama workshop dealing with the theme of discrimination, if participants lack sufficient knowledge on the topic, it is expected that the educator will adopt a role in order to guide them toward a critical engagement with the issue. The aim of the process is to collectively construct a deep, critical understanding of the topic and to encourage participants to contribute to that construction (Eriksson 2007). According to Taylor (2020), Heathcote argued that drama should concern itself with the dilemmas and predicaments that people encounter and therefore insisted that

drama work be structured in a way that allows for a thorough investigation of the consequences of human action.

Brian Way was a pioneer of drama who was influenced by humanistic psychology, particularly the ideas of Rogers and Maslow. In contrast, Bolton and Heathcote integrated interpretivist paradigms—especially those that began to gain attention in the 1970s—into the field of drama, including emerging topics in the social sciences such as symbolic interactionism. They adopted a sociological perspective that focused on how everyday life experiences are interpreted and given meaning through interaction among participants in drama processes. In doing so, they drew upon Erving Goffman's dramaturgical analysis approach as outlined in his 1956 book *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*. In this work, Goffman—continuing the tradition of role theory in sociology—defines everyday interactions as a kind of 'performance,' advocating that such performances be examined through the eyes of a dramaturge, sociologist, or researcher. The influence of these two distinct paradigms is clearly evident in the respective theatrical approaches chosen by the two pioneers.

Results, Discussion and Suggestions

It has been concluded that the dramatic approaches of Way and Heathcote differ in their educational, artistic, and philosophical foundations, and that any analysis of these approaches must consider such foundations as an integrated whole. Heathcote's work, in particular, is grounded in critical pedagogy and critical theory, drawing upon concerns such as dialogue, questioning of social realities, and striving for change. This orientation underpinned her adoption of a Brechtian theatrical model that explicitly aims at social critique and transformation. In particular, Heathcote's emphasis on dialogue resonates closely with Freire's (1996) conception of dialogue as a practice of freedom, whereby learners and teachers engage in mutual inquiry and co-construction of knowledge. Drama, when approached in this manner, becomes a dialogic process in which participants critically examine their lived realities while simultaneously rehearsing alternative possibilities. Such a framework reinforces Heathcote's belief in the collective construction of meaning and her insistence on drama as a medium for transformation rather than mere enactment. In contrast, Way's preference for Stanislavski reflects a drama approach centred upon the individual's development rather than collective ideologies, resonating with the humanistic spirit of his time.

Accordingly, when examining the contributions of pioneers in the history of drama, it is essential to situate their educational, philosophical, and artistic perspectives as relational and interconnected. Understanding the approach of one pioneer thus necessitates interpreting it in relation to that of another. A relational historical analysis of these positions provides not only a more nuanced appreciation of their work but also enables researchers and practitioners to ground their own practice within a more deliberate and critically informed framework.

In the Turkish context, it may be said that contemporary understandings of drama continue to be nourished by both sources. On the one hand, processes that prioritise activities and personal development tend to align more closely with Way's approach, with the artistic quality of drama sessions frequently echoing a Stanislavskian mode of expressive performance. On the other hand, the increasing prevalence of practices oriented towards social critique and transformation (Metinnam & Adıgüzel 2019; Özen & Adıgüzel 2018; Karaosmanoğlu, Adıgüzel & Özdemir-Şimşek 2022; Karaosmanoğlu 2024) highlights the enduring relevance of Heathcote's Brechtian and critically pedagogical orientation.

Moreover, it is evident that the development of these pioneering approaches has been deeply shaped by the socio-economic, cultural, and political needs of their respective historical moments. For this reason, the influence of the spirit of the age on the formation of each drama approach should not be overlooked. An accurate understanding of the history of drama—educationally, artistically, and philosophically—and particularly of the pioneering approaches that have shaped it, is essential for constructing future practices on a sound basis. In addition to comparative and relational historical analyses, the incorporation of applied studies is strongly recommended. In this way, it is argued that the quality of drama research in Turkey, as well as educator training, planning, implementation, and curriculum development, may be significantly enhanced.

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Appendix A – Expanded Coding Table

Excerpt from Document	Code	Theme
Way emphasises experiential learning and self-actualisation.	Experiential learning	Personal Development
Way refers to Stanislavski's system of inner action.	Theatrical influence (Stanislavski)	Theatrical Orientation
Way describes drama as a means of children's self-expression.	Children's self-expression	Personal Development
Way highlights the cultivation of the whole person through drama.	Holistic personal development	Personal Development
Heathcote positions drama as an inquiry into social dilemmas.	Social inquiry	Social Critique and Transformation
Heathcote draws upon Brechtian theatre to create critical distance.	Theatrical influence (Brechtian techniques)	Theatrical Orientation
Heathcote introduces teacher-in-role as a technique to guide learning.	Teacher-in-role (scaffolding)	Pedagogical Innovation
Heathcote frames the drama process within a sociological and anthropological lens.	Sociological/anthropological foundation	Philosophical Orientation

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