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ABSTRACT

A Philosophical Investigation into Drama in Education

Michael P. Fleming

The investigation into drama in education in this thesis is conducted through an exploration of four central concepts: aims, learning, meaning and feeling. Philosophical misconceptions related to those concepts are criticised; justifications for the subject are examined; and widely accepted methods of describing the development of the subject are challenged. Chapters one and two establish the framework for the study by considering the nature and role of philosophy in education and the problems and confusions within drama in education. It is argued that philosophy has an important role in education in the investigation of subjects. Chapter three argues for the importance of aims not as terminal goals but as a recognition of the teacher as intentional agent. By distinguishing aims from the values and functions of drama, the development of the subject can be described with more clarity. Chapter four highlights problems associated with the notion of 'drama for learning' and argues that to be coherent, the idea demands an adequate conception of learning and intention and also needs to be linked with the concept of teaching. Chapter five examines ideas of form, consciousness and intention in relation to meaning. Confusions related to those concepts are examined. A unifying concept of aesthetic meaning which includes the consciousness of the participants as one of its constituents is recommended. Chapter six argues that a misconception of the way 'emotion' words operate in our language pervades thinking and writing about drama. Problems associated with the concept of expression are examined and writers who draw on outmoded expression theories of art, thus failing to give an adequate theoretical view of feeling in aesthetic education, are criticised. It is argued that in drama a coherent view emerges if participants are viewed as percipients in terms of the feeling content. An extension of this view which is linked to challenges to objectivist aesthetics is to see creative engagement in drama in part as a means of educating aesthetic response to art.

A PHILOSOPHICAL INVESTIGATION INTO DRAMA IN EDUCATION

Michael P. Fleming

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INTRODUCTION

Drama in education is a relatively recent subject but it has developed rapidly since its adoption in schools. That development has not been a question of simple progress from one consolidated approach to another but the subject has grown in different directions and is conceived differently by different exponents. Thus some of the problems and questions associated with the subject are quite fundamental. Are 'drama as art' and 'drama for learning' two contradictory notions? What is meant by 'drama for learning'? How precisely should learning objectives be specified? This study has been undertaken in the belief that an application of philosophy to drama in education will be beneficial in going some way towards answering these and many other questions associated with the subject.

My own involvement with drama began in 1971 and my initial impression then started me on the line of thought which led to this study. I was struck first of all by the degree of sophistication with which those involved in drama in education applied themselves to thinking about their practice, forming it seemed something of a vanguard in pedagogical thinking. I was also struck, however, by the fact that drama teachers themselves often seemed confused when it came to theorising; concepts like play, aims, meaning, feeling were used with fervour but often with little clarity. There was also a lack of communication with the education world outside drama.



Since then of course, publications by authors like Allen, Bolton, Heathcote, McGregor, Robinson have made significant advances in the subject and have gone a long way towards clarifying some of the important issues, but in many ways my initial impressions still hold good. Such writers have taken the subject to sophisticated levels but the problems of communication are still with us. It is not uncommon for example to read reviews of recent drama books which accuse authors of neglecting developments in the subject. Stanley's Drama Without Script, we are told, "is simply out of date. It belongs to the same generations of books on drama in education as Brian Way's Development Through Drama and Pemberton Billing and Clegg's Teaching Drama".¹ In another review we are told that the authors of two books on drama "seem unaware of any developments in the philosophy and practice of drama in education".² But what exactly does being "out of date" mean in drama and what have been the developments in the subject? I will be arguing that it is more difficult to describe those developments than many commentators assume.

Faced with confusion inside the subject, it is not surprising that educational thinkers have often found it difficult to understand and value drama, and penetrate what they see as its rather mysterious aura and idiosyncratic use of language. It seemed that

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- 1 K. Byron, Review of S. Stanley's Drama Without Script, 2D (Vol. 1, No. 1, Autumn 1981).
 - 2 C. O'Neill, Review of M.E. Polsky's Let's Improvise and R. James and P. Williams' A Guide To Improvisation, Times Educational Supplement (30.1.81).

some attempt was needed to examine the field of drama in education, not with a view to offering further theories and justifications, but in an effort to put the present state of the subject in some sort of conceptual order. By examining drama from a philosophical perspective in this study, it is hoped that some of the problems of communication, both within the field and with the educational world outside, will be alleviated.

The purpose then will be to conduct a philosophical investigation of drama in education. Immediately a number of questions are raised. What is meant by a philosophical investigation? To what is 'drama in education' taken to refer? The term 'drama in education' can cause problems because its use can easily result in a limitation of the way the subject is conceived. It is easy to understand why Allen preferred 'drama in schools' because it avoids the tendency to see 'drama in education' or 'educational drama' as a subject distinct from drama.³ On the other hand, some writers might argue that it is useful to employ terminology which indicates that the purpose is not to train actors or to introduce pupils to theatre craft but to use the subject for educational purposes. But what concept of education is implied in the particular notion of 'educational purposes'? The simplest of questions, here the very terminology used to describe the subject, raises a number of conceptual problems which demand the rigour of a philosophical approach.

3 J. Allen, Drama in Schools: Its Theory and Practice (Heinemann, 1979).

This does not mean that the questions which will be considered in this study have not been discussed before; indeed, one of the purposes will be to examine critically what others have said. Nor would it be true to say that these questions have not been discussed philosophically. It could be argued that any discussion of the subject which deals with the conceptual problems tends to become philosophical. Different exponents have made reference to writers like Reid, Langer and Polanyi to provide a theoretical basis for the subject. However, it seems important that an attempt be made to draw on philosophy in a more systematic way to investigate the subject. It will be argued in the course of this study that the piecemeal application of philosophical writing to drama in education has given rise to theoretical confusion.

Various branches of philosophy (epistemology, aesthetics, philosophy of mind, philosophy of education) will be relevant. This fact raises certain problems. Many of the questions which will be discussed raise issues which are major philosophical problems in their own right. There is thus the danger of oversimplifying the philosophical discussion of the problem in order to clarify the question in the context of drama. There is the equal danger of losing sight of the central theoretical problems in drama and getting immersed in the philosophical discussion. Finding the right balance here will depend in part on finding the appropriate structure. It will be necessary to proceed cautiously and spend some time establishing a framework. The first two chapters

can therefore be seen as an introduction to the main discussion which follows. There is another reason why a lengthy introduction is necessary. A study of this kind will inevitably make certain implicit assumptions about philosophy, about its scope, its limitations and its relevance to education. It will be important therefore to give some explicit attention to these questions.

CHAPTER ONE

INVESTIGATING DRAMA

(i) Introduction

The purpose of this chapter will be to establish what is meant by a philosophical investigation of drama in education. It may seem that this question is a very narrow one and should be prefaced by a consideration of what a philosophical investigation of a subject, any subject, might entail. It could be argued that to do so would provide a model for the application of philosophical methods to individual subjects taught in school, an area where philosophy can be of use in educational thinking. Although much of what will be said here will apply to the application of philosophy to the teaching of subjects in a general way, particularly in the section entitled 'Subjects', it will not be the intention to adopt an approach which seeks to establish or work from a model. It seems that if an investigation in this area is to be both helpful and philosophically sound it must be directed at the specific questions which are posed in the teaching of a specific subject. For example, if drama is compared with physics, there is little disagreement about what constitutes physics (there is a body of knowledge, a method of procedure to which the pupils must be introduced) but there is no similar agreement about what constitutes drama. We speak of teaching physics and learning physics whereas there may be objections to saying that pupils learn drama but rather that they learn through

drama. Observations of this nature may lead to questions about what constitutes being called a subject at all.

It might be thought therefore that there is little need of any further preliminary discussion. If the actual problems represent the starting points, then the philosophical aspects of those problems can be discussed as the study proceeds. Although this will be the way forward, two reasons were stated earlier why a more detailed introduction is necessary; it is important to establish a clear structure and comment on the nature of philosophy and its relevance to education. A third reason can now be added; it is necessary to indicate what sorts of questions are best considered by a philosophical investigation of this kind. For example, the question 'does a C.S.E. qualification in drama have status with employers?' may be important to teachers but it is one which will be resolved by a statistical survey directed at employers. For the purpose of such a survey the definition of what is meant by 'drama' will be the subject which goes by that title on the curriculum in the school. Another question like, 'what is the justification for teaching drama?' may need much closer attention to the concept 'drama' even though this also appears to assume that there is agreement about what is meant by 'drama'. The second question is more likely to be relevant to a philosopher's concern but the examples may be misleading if they imply that it is always easy to distinguish philosophical from non-philosophical questions. The boundaries between empirical and conceptual questions are not always very

clear and to attempt to demarcate a boundary in some instances can itself be seen as a philosophical problem. The conceptual problems may be concealed. For example, a methodological question in drama like 'how is depth achieved?' may be best answered after a discussion which seeks to determine whether the notion of depth in this context is coherent. That discussion may in turn have implications for the practice of the subject.

This chapter then will be concerned with philosophy of education and its relevance to the teaching of subjects in general and specifically to drama in education. Section one will give some background on the development of philosophy of education and will discuss in particular the dominance of conceptual analysis and the reservations which have been expressed with this approach. Section two will consider the application of philosophy to the teaching of subjects. Four general areas will be identified which provide a background for the more specific questions to which a particular subject will give rise. Section three will consider in more detail the relevance of philosophy to drama in education. Here it will be stressed that it is the nature of the subject and even more specifically the present state of development of the subject which has determined the scope and purpose of this study. Although the thesis will have certain stated limitations, it is not the intention to delimit a particular role for the relevance of philosophy to education.

(ii) Philosophy and Education

The approach to philosophy of education which grew from the linguistic tradition in philosophy is most often characterised as the clarification of concepts. The role of philosophy is not seen to be that of providing new knowledge but rather to analyse and clarify the concepts in which our ideas find expression. The analytic approach to the philosophy of education which is generally thought to have originated with books by Hardie and O'Connor¹, and which is largely associated through the 1960s and 1970s with the writings of Peters, has been dominant for some time and will be familiar to anyone with even a passing knowledge of philosophy of education. There has, however, been a growing dissatisfaction with this approach. Reid, with some foresight in 1965, argued against what he saw as this narrow role for philosophy and warned that, "the proper function of analysis is the better understanding of the wholes which are analysed; it is servant not master".²

Peters' work has been subject to criticism from various quarters³ but one of the clearest and most trenchant criticisms has come in an article by Haack who has advocated a return to a

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- 1 C.D. Hardie, Truth and Fallacy in Educational Theory (Cambridge University Press, 1942).
D.J. O'Connor, An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education (Routledge, 1957).
 - 2 L.A. Reid, "Philosophy and the Theory and Practice of Education" in R.D. Archambault (ed.), Philosophical Analysis and Education (Routledge, 1965), p. 24.
 - 3 J. Wilson, "Philosophy and Education: retrospect and prospect", Oxford Review of Education (Vol. 6, No. 1, 1980), p. 42. He identifies some of the major critics.

traditional approach to the philosophy of education so that it can once more have as consequence recommendations for the betterment of educational institutions, practices and policies.⁴ The reasons are varied and closely argued. The article shows that the criticisms usually made of the traditional view are not adequate and goes on to point out inconsistencies and internal defects in Peters' philosophy. In particular, it is suggested that there are serious problems with his notion of conceptual truth (one whose truth depends on its meaning) which is central to Peters' approach and that of other philosophers in his tradition. Haack goes on to point out that it is unclear in Peters' analysis of education whether he is attempting to present the concept of education (an essentialist view) or whether he favours one among several acknowledged concepts of education. It is also suggested that, contrary to the view of the 'new' philosophers of education, it is not conceptual confusion which is the source of the poor state of pedagogic theory but "lack of well-attested information and adverse social conditions".⁵

It is not necessary here to go further into the technicalities of Haack's article. Enough of a warning note has been sounded against assuming that second order analysis of concepts, important as this task may be in some contexts, is the only role for philosophy of education. Critics of the analytic approach do not

4 R.J. Haack, "Philosophies of Education", Philosophy (Vol. 51, No. 196, April 1976), pp. 159-176.

5 ibid., p. 174.

tend to deny that there is a place for linguistic analysis but question this exclusive narrow definition of philosophy. Passmore has stated that the great temptation of analytic philosophy is "to collapse into the making of pointless distinctions, the construction of unnecessary definitions ..."⁶. Analysis can easily lose sight of its purpose or indeed lack any purpose from the outset. The use of concepts and all the ramifications of their use can be illustrated but without necessarily any positive advance in thinking.

The important point about conceptual analysis in education is that it is often unclear on what basis the clarification is proceeding. This was one of the criticisms of Peters' thinking mentioned above. Appeal is often made to so-called 'ordinary usage' but the use of concepts varies depending on the context. What, for example, would an analysis of 'drama' devoid of any context amount to? A list of necessary and sufficient conditions for its use? But on what basis? On the basis of its use by teachers, writers on the subject, the man in the street? It may be possible instead to describe the different ways the term is used by different people, to uncover a network of family resemblances, but again unless there is a substantial question underlying this sort of clarification, it is in danger of being a pointless exercise.

Although this study will be based on the examination of central concepts in the subject, it will not belong in any narrow

6 J. Passmore, The Philosophy of Teaching (Duckworth, 1980), p. 8.

sense to the tradition of linguistic analysis in philosophy of education. The difference in emphasis is an important one, although perhaps not immediately obvious, and has to do with the sense of purpose with which an examination of concepts is conducted. It is for this reason that it is important that the present study centres on the problems which arise in the particular subject. For example, it may be a question of looking at the concept of aims in the teaching of drama but in that case the discussion must be rooted in the specific questions which pertain to the subject and which present a real problem for teachers such as, 'how far are we entitled to demand the precise specification of objectives given the nature of the subject?' It may be a question not of analysing the logic of 'education' in a vacuum but of attempting to uncover what concept of education is implicit in a particular approach to the teaching of drama. It will not be a question of seeking necessary and sufficient conditions for teaching and learning but rather to examine the notions of teaching drama and learning through drama to assess whether they are meaningful.

The view has been argued that philosophy because it "leaves everything as it is" is necessarily conservative and cannot affect practice.⁷ This view has been disputed by Freeman.⁸ She

7 The actual quotation is from Wittgenstein's Philosophical Investigations (Basil Blackwell, 1953) but philosophers would disagree over the interpretation.

8 H. Freeman, "On the Nature of Philosophy of Education and its Practice in Colleges and Departments of Education or 'Does Philosophy of Education leave everything as it is?'" , Education For Teaching (Autumn 1975, No. 98).

disagrees that philosophy leaves everything as it is and claims that much work in the philosophy of education conceived as conceptual analysis has prescriptive implications for practice. She begins her argument by using the work of P.S. Wilson.⁹ Wilson, she argues, does not intend to prescribe but the reader might well think that he has been given prescriptions for what is worth doing,

"What the teacher ought to do is help children learn through interest, for education is the development of interest and children ought to be educated and not merely 'schooled'."¹⁰

Wilson, by analysing the concept of 'education' in a particular way to include the notion of interest, is making a prescription. I would want to extend Freeman's argument here by saying that the prescription can be more usefully identified if it is recognised that the analysis is making recommendations about the use of concepts. In other words, Wilson is not making a purely descriptive analysis of all the uses of the term education but he is making a recommendation about the use of that particular concept. I think that there is an advantage in seeing the prescription in terms of a recommendation on the use of concepts because it makes it clearer that the analysis will only affect practice if both (a) the analysis is accepted and (b) there is agreement that the activity in question should be designated by

9 P.S. Wilson, Interest and Discipline in Education (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1971).

10 H. Freeman, op. cit. (1975), p. 39.

the particular concept. In other words, faced with Wilson's argument one can either reject his analysis of education or accept it and respond that schools should be concerned with schooling rather than education or accept it and have one's actual practice changed. The recommendation to use a concept in a particular way is not entirely equivalent to offering a stipulative definition but may be drawn from a descriptive analysis of the way a concept is used in a particular context. The important point is that analysis of this kind should not carry implicit normative judgements while masquerading as being value free.

This latter criticism is directed by Nidditch at the whole conceptual analysis approach to philosophy.¹¹ He maintains that philosophers make rigid claims about what education ought to be on the basis of what is (i.e. is said or thought in using the educational concepts). Although supposedly limiting themselves to discerning and describing what they call conceptual truths or even logical truths, "these philosophers of education continually commit themselves to highly controvertible evaluative propositions about education as if their statements were truths of the discipline of philosophy".¹² Nidditch's criticism, I would suggest, does not show that analysis is of no importance

11 P.H. Nidditch, "Philosophy of Education and the Place of Science on the Curriculum" in G. Langford and D.J. O'Connor (eds.), New Essays in the Philosophy of Education (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973).

12 *ibid.*, p. 239.

but that there are dangers of making claims in the name of analysis which are not valid. This question of the relationship between conceptual analysis, value judgements and practice is a complex one which I will not pursue here. For the purposes of this study it is enough to reaffirm that the role of philosophy will be to deal with specific conceptual problems to which the subject gives rise. The problem of the relationship of analysis to practice arises when that analysis takes place outside any meaningful context.

One of the reasons for the dominance of analytic philosophy has not been lack of criticism but lack of positive alternative, particularly in the more popular anthologies and introductory readings. Recently the picture has been changing. One example is Hamlyn's book, Experience and the Growth of Understanding. Here he returns to the traditional question of the genesis of knowledge and, having examined empiricist and rationalist accounts, offers a theory of his own which he applies to education. In his review of this book, Durkin comments as follows,

"Much of the contemporary philosophy of education, especially that influenced by the principles of conceptual analysis, has proved a pretty aimless affair. The analyses are frequently fudged, the insights parasitic, and the major questions have been dodged, not in the reticent and properly shameful acknowledgement of impotence that we might expect, but in a quite gleeful disdain of anything of real intellectual interest. Practitioners of this peculiar discipline have often boasted of their uninterest in anything more sophisticated or compelling than second order pontification."¹³

13 K. Durkin, review of D. Hamlyn's Experience and the Growth of Understanding in British Journal of Educational Studies (Vol. XXVII, No. 3, October 1979), p. 261.

The author goes on to welcome Hamlyn's book as one of a small number of recent attempts to vitalise the field.

There has also been a growing interest in a phenomenological approach to philosophy of education. Neil Bolton has argued for the importance of phenomenology and in particular its implications for research and education. Defining phenomenology as "critical reflection upon the essential nature of experience", and stressing the difference between philosophical and sociological/psychological approaches, he claims it to be a "necessary foundation for research, theory and practice in education".¹⁴ The collection of essays edited by Curtis and Mays presents a number of articles specifically concerned with application of phenomenology to education.¹⁵ An article by R.T. Allen which argues for the importance of Polanyi's work to education is also a useful introduction to the latter's writing.¹⁶ Philosophers who have previously been committed to conceptual analysis have begun to argue for the value of a phenomenological approach. Langford, for example, describes his method in Teaching as a Profession as phenomenological rather than analytic.¹⁷ Articles by writers like Elliott and

14 N. Bolton, "Phenomenology and Education", British Journal of Educational Studies (Vol. XXVII, No. 3, October 1979), p. 247.

15 B. Curtis and W. Mays (eds.), Phenomenology and Education (Methuen, 1978).

16 R.T. Allen, "The Philosophy of Michael Polanyi and its Significance for Education", Journal of Philosophy of Education (Vol. 12, 1978).

17 G. Langford, Teaching as a Profession (Manchester University Press, 1978), p. 2, as quoted by A. Thatcher, "Education and the Concept of a Person", Journal of Philosophy of Education (Vol. 14, No. 1, 1980), p. 117.

Dunlop have given a refreshing slant to many of the issues in philosophy of education.

Such developments are to be welcomed and suggest that it might be unwise to base this study on any one particular philosophical method which might serve to limit its scope in an unhelpful way. However, before considering in more detail the relevance of philosophy to drama in education it will be necessary to consider the more general question of the investigation of subjects.

(iii) Subjects

It is relatively easy to quote examples which show that the questions which are pertinent to one particular subject are not necessarily so to another. Some questions which may appear to be simply a problem of specific curriculum content (should History lessons be based on the History of Europe or include World History, particularly given the existence of different ethnic groups within a school and community? should History necessarily be taught on a chronological basis?) may be tied to conceptual questions (what is history? what is the nature of the conceptual questions with which the historian deals?) or questions of value. In the case of mathematics, the dilemma or disagreement about modern v. traditional maths may be shown to depend on different concepts of education implicit in the two approaches, one placing value on the acquisition of skills, the other placing more emphasis

on mathematical thinking.¹⁸ The questions and problems relevant to the teaching of subjects vary. Some of the problems are obviously practical, others obviously conceptual, and for others their conceptual basis may need to be exhibited.

It is necessary to stress that the type of investigation I am advocating here is not confined to a philosophical analysis of the subject matter (although that may constitute part of it) but a philosophical perspective on the teaching of the subject. The question is complicated by the fact that the particular subject under discussion in this study is often termed 'drama in education' and thus distinguished from 'drama'. We do not speak of 'physics in education' or 'music in education' but simply 'music' or 'physics' whereas the subject in question is more usually termed 'drama in education'. How 'drama' differs from 'drama in education' may well be part of the investigation but the difference in terms is convenient for the point being made here. Philosophy of x in this case, where x is the subject, would not be philosophy of drama if it was established that 'drama in education' is different from 'drama'. Philosophy of drama would involve the investigation in the field of aesthetics which would, of course, be relevant and useful to the teacher. What I am proposing, however, is that there is a wider concern which has to do with what might be termed the 'philosophy of the teaching

18 C. Ormell, "The Problem of Curriculum Sequence in Mathematics" in G. Langford and D.J. O'Connor (eds.), op. cit., (1973).

of x' which will embrace the philosophy of x but will include other concerns more specifically related to the teaching of the subject.

Reference has already been made to one such concern in the previous section. Attempts to analyse the concept of teaching in philosophy of education have not been very helpful in a positive way but have rather served to criticise extreme child-centred approaches to education (this argument will be developed in Chapter Four on Learning). Instead of looking at the concept of teaching in isolation, there may be a future in considering the notion of 'teaching x'. Also, attempts to define and compare different models of teaching (impression, insight rule¹⁹ or transmission v. enquiry) tend to ignore the possibility that different models may be appropriate to different subjects.

There is a danger with the philosophy of x approach of assuming without question that the academic model or alternatively the body of knowledge upon which the 'philosophy of' is likely to be based is necessarily the conception of the subject which is relevant to the teaching situation. Drama is not necessarily the appreciation and study of dramatic texts, religion is not necessarily the study of Christian theology. Neither is it simply a matter of curriculum content. The approach in question (philosophy

19 I. Scheffler, "Philosophical Models of Teaching" in R.S. Peters (ed.), The Concept of Education (Routledge, 1967), p. 120.

of x) might lead to an uncritical acceptance of a particular concept of mental development.²⁰

It may be objected that an approach which takes a particular subject as its starting point is making the implicit assumption from the beginning that the subject should occupy a place on the curriculum. A philosophical consideration of a subject, the argument might go, should concern itself with justification and should therefore begin with wider philosophical issues. There might be some validity in this objection if only philosophical arguments were considered in deciding whether a subject should occupy place on the curriculum. Hirst has argued against basing curriculum change on purely philosophical grounds.²¹ His view seems right in that although philosophy can throw light on curriculum questions, the final decisions about what is taught must involve other considerations. The starting point for an investigation of a particular subject then is more the fact that the subject is taught in schools and that there are questions and problems related to the teaching of that subject which can benefit from philosophical considerations.

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- 20 J. Gribble, Introduction to Philosophy of Education (Boston, Allyn and Bacon Inc., 1969). He argues that a teacher should have "attempted a philosophic analysis of the nature of his subject", p. 42. In the course of his argument he takes for granted Hirst's theory of initiation into forms of knowledge.
- 21 P. Hirst, "Philosophy and Curriculum Planning" in P. Hirst, Knowledge and the Curriculum (Routledge, 1974).

A philosophical investigation of a subject might concern itself with the following areas:

- (a) the major concepts with a view to the clarification of their use;
- (b) theory - not in providing a theory for the subject but in establishing criteria for assessing the theoretical foundations for the subject which already exist;
- (c) concept of education - to determine what concept of education is implicit in various approaches to the subject;
- (d) curriculum considerations - how is the inclusion of the subject on the curriculum variously justified?

My intention in this study will be to examine these areas using selected concepts as a frame. The areas overlap a great deal but they will each be given separate comment.

The first of these, the clarification of central concepts, is less likely to be subject to the sort of criticism identified earlier (that much of this sort of analysis lacks purpose) because the subject will provide the necessary direction. It will be a question of looking at general educational concepts (e.g. teaching and learning) as well as those which are more particularly related to the subject (e.g. feeling and symbolism are more likely to be relevant to English or Drama). There may also be a need to examine

the way concepts are used by different exponents of the subject to look for contradictions and confusions. Finally, it may be necessary to examine the way concepts have changed in the course of the development of the subject in order to reflect the different way the subject is conceived.

In considering the second area it will be useful to be aware that there are different notions of what an educational theory is.²² I do not propose to go into these in detail, rather to suggest that the role of a philosophical investigation will not be to establish a theoretical foundation for the subject because to do so might be to neglect other considerations (whether psychological, historical or methodological) which might be relevant. In making this point I am not necessarily subscribing to the sort of view associated with the 'new' philosophy of education described earlier, that it is possible to establish a value-free, purely critical philosophy of education or to the argument that educational theory should not be informed by drawing on philosophical beliefs.

It is useful here to use a distinction made by Haack between a global and a specific educational theory:

22 See, for example, D.J. O'Connor, "The Nature and Scope of Educational Theory (1)" and P. Hirst, "The Nature and Scope of Educational Theory (2)" both in G. Langford and D.J. O'Connor, op. cit. (1973). For a useful summary of different notions of theory see M. Downey and A.V. Kelly, Theory and Practice of Education (Harper and Row, 1979), Chapter 8.

"A global educational theory has to do with an overall conception of education and its aims ... A specific educational theory, on the other hand, is a theory such as that mathematics is best taught by beginning with abstract structures such as set theory and vector spaces rather than with the teaching of computational skills, or the theory that reading is best taught by the 'total' method or by the analytical method."²³

Philosophical theories, it is suggested, are usually the sort which are called here global. A theory of a subject is more likely to be closer to what is here called specific which will of course either explicitly or implicitly be based on a global theory of education. It will be the task of the investigation to make the concept of education underlying the subject explicit.

This leads to the third area, determining what concept of education is implicit in various approaches to the subject. The clarification of what is meant by 'education' has been the major concern of much philosophy of education. Peters rejects certain models of education on the grounds that what is a necessary part of the concept is elevated to providing a model, giving an unbalanced view. The view, for example, that education must be concerned with something that is extrinsic that is worthwhile tends to place a stress on instrumental views of education whereas being worthwhile is a necessary part of what is meant by 'education'. Similarly 'growth' which is a necessary part of education is elevated to the extent that the growth model determines procedure.

23 R.J. Haack, op. cit. (1976), p. 171.

Peters here is not just rejecting specific models but is rejecting the whole idea that the presentation of a model is the right procedure. Some of the major points of Peters' initial analysis of education can be summarised as follows: the concept 'education' picks out no particular activity or process but lays down criteria to which activities or processes must conform; we must guard against misleading models like 'growth' and 'moulding'; the normative features of education are intrinsic and must not be presented as extrinsic ends; education can be viewed as tasks related to achievements.²⁴

Frankena, like Peters, rejects the socialisation model of education in favour of a normative - "The fostering in the young of the dispositions or states of mind that are desirable" rather than those that are "regarded as desirable by their elders".²⁵

Langford distinguishes between formal and informal education (in the first case two parties are distinguished, one of whom accepts responsibility for the education of the other) and promotes the view that to become educated is to learn to be a person.²⁶

However, his definition that education is "an activity which aims at practical results in contrast with activities which aim at

24 See in particular, R.S. Peters, op. cit. (1967).

25 W.K. Frankena, "The Concept of Education Today" in J.F. Doyle (ed.), Educational Judgments - Papers in the Philosophy of Education (Routledge, 1973), p. 20.

26 G. Langford, "The Concept of Education" in G. Langford and D.J. O'Connor, op. cit. (1973).

theoretical results" is criticised by Schofield because it fails to distinguish education from other activities which aim at practical results.²⁷

The above summaries do not do justice to the complexities of the analyses offered but the point is that faced with such a marked difference in the analysis of as fundamental a term as 'education', the teacher who wishes to deepen his understanding of the education process may have some difficulties. 'Education' is used in all sorts of ways, to refer to any process going on in schools, to refer only to those processes which conform to some notion of what education ought to be. As Dunlop has said, "If we are interested in the concept of education in a philosophically interesting way we cannot be merely interested in how the word is used or in the distinctions people have in mind when they use it. Clearly in these senses the concept could be connected with all sorts of criteria in particular social groups".²⁸ The point he makes is that the question 'what is education?' should be seen as a question which asks 'what ought we to do?'

How then will the analysis of the concept education relate to a philosophical investigation of a subject? It would seem that the sensible procedure, in the light of what has been said, is not to start with attempting to analyse or assess the analyses of the concept education in a very general sense. Instead it would seem

27 H. Schofield, The Philosophy of Education: An Introduction (Allen and Unwin, 1972), p. 33.

28 F.N. Dunlop, "Education and Human Nature", Proceedings of the Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain (Vol. IV, January 1970), p. 41.

to make sense to look at the different approaches to a particular subject which have and do exist and seek to make explicit which concept(s) of education is embodied in them. It will be a matter of asking such questions as, 'Is education being used in a normative or descriptive sense?', 'Is the concept of education allied to one particular model, say the growth or socialisation model?', 'At what point does it make more sense to speak of training rather than education in the context of the subject?'.

So far I have suggested that the investigation of subjects will involve the analysis of concepts with a view to both clarifying those concepts over which there is clearly some confusion and in an effort to examine theoretical foundations for the subject. The second objective will involve looking at concepts of education implicit in different approaches to the subject which in turn will mean an examination of associated educational concepts within the context of the subject. The fourth area which was identified overlaps with the others - the justification for the inclusion of a subject on the curriculum relates closely to the theoretical foundations for the subject which in turn can partly be determined by making explicit what concept of education is being promoted by a particular approach. If a philosophical investigation is to be directed at one specific subject then it seems fair to suggest that part at least of that investigation might be concerned with how that subject is justified in terms of its inclusion in the curriculum of an educational institution. A major role of philosophy of education in recent years has been to throw light on criteria and principles which determine curriculum. Questions which are important

in general curriculum considerations and planning may be usefully applied to the specific subject under discussion. I have in mind such questions as the importance or lack of importance in identifying and making explicit content and objectives.²⁹

This then completes the general account of the sorts of areas to which a philosophical investigation of a subject might be directed. It may seem on the basis of what has been said so far that two contradictory procedures are being advocated. On the one hand it was suggested earlier that an investigation of this kind should be directed at specific questions and problems in the subject yet here some very general areas have been identified with the implication that they may be relevant to all subjects. It will be argued in the next section, which will be concerned with what a philosophical investigation of drama will specifically entail, that these two procedures can be reconciled.

(iv) Philosophy and Drama

To begin this section it will be worth repeating in abbreviated form areas with which it was suggested an investigation of this kind would be concerned. They were:

- (a) Clarifying those terms which seem to require clarification;
- (b) Examining theoretical foundations for the subject;

29 This will be discussed in Chapter Four on Learning.

- (c) Determining what idea of education is implicit in a particular approach;
- (d) Asking questions about the justification of the subject.

The four areas are closely related. Asking questions about why any subject should be taught in schools will very soon lead to a consideration of what is meant by 'education'. In turn an examination of the concept of education held by exponents of a particular view about the teaching of a subject will lead inevitably to a closer look at the theoretical foundations for those views. The study as a whole will need to be couched in terms of (a), the clarification of the use of terms by exponents of one view or another.

In embarking upon this study a number of methods of procedure seem possible. Given that four areas have been identified and given that the study will be conducted on the basis that there are different approaches to the teaching of the subject, a simple method would be to apply the four areas to each major exponent of drama in turn, or alternatively, to take each area in turn and apply it to the major exponents identified. Neither of these methods which may at first seem the clearest and most obvious, will be adopted for reasons to do with the nature of the subject itself and to do with the need to reconcile these general areas with more specific questions.

Although there are different approaches to the teaching of drama, to identify only the major exponents of the subject is not

to do justice to the field. Although names like Slade and Way stand out clearly as influences in the development of the subject in the 1950s and 1960s, some aspects of the subject are not clearly identified with a particular name. Also, although many writers on drama after Slade were influenced by him, it is easy to ignore ways in which these writers were beginning to differ in their outlook. In a discussion of "Drama and Creativity", McLeod makes the comment, "Slade became a precursor to a number of practically orientated books (e.g. Adland, 1964; Pemberton Billing and Clegg, 1965; and Way, 1968), all of which were based on the Slade model".³⁰ The comment disguises crucial differences between the exponents listed here. To take just one example, the role of the teacher in Pemberton Billing and Clegg's approach, "The drama teacher's job is to discipline and direct the child's play into channels where he needs to make worthwhile decisions and discoveries"³¹ is very different from Slade's insistence that, "The Child, through Child Drama, avoids the imposition of well-intentioned, ill-informed adult plans".³²

30 J. McLeod, "Drama and Creativity" in Speech and Drama (29, Spring 1980, 2). The date cited for Way's book by McLeod is 1968 but should be 1967.

31 R.N. Pemberton Billing and J.D. Clegg, Teaching Drama (University of London Press, 1965), p. 21.

32 P. Slade, Child Drama (University of London Press, 1954), p. 108. It should be acknowledged that in practice Slade did plan for children. Also, the role of the adult changed as the child grew older.

If a method which relies on identifying and discussing major exponents is in danger of leading to problems, so also is the approach which proceeds in terms of 'schools of thought' such as 'drama as play', 'drama as art', 'drama as learning'. The danger here is of preempting the analysis, forcing distinctions which are artificial and forcing exponents into categories in which they do not comfortably fit. In this respect I depart from what has become an orthodox way of viewing and describing drama.

The method of procedure which seems most appropriate for a study of this kind is to identify and explore the major concepts which require examination. Although this approach presents slightly more difficulties in terms of structure, there are a number of reasons why it is not only viable but more useful than the alternatives identified. Because the discussion will proceed in terms of concepts, the philosophical method will be more clearly and explicitly demonstrated. Also, the discussion of drama in education will be more clearly located within the academic discipline of philosophy of education and philosophy. Much writing on drama in education draws on other disciplines in an unsystematic way, using quotations from random sources to support ideas. This sometimes leads to problems as will be shown in this study.

An approach of this nature will also be useful in reconciling the general areas (a - d) with the more specific questions. The four areas can be subsumed under the general question, 'why teach drama?' meaning, 'How has drama been variously justified?'. Those concepts will be identified which are most pertinent to the

justification of drama and will provide a focus for the discussion of some of the questions which need illumination. Also, by relating central concepts to writers in the field a clearer perspective will be formed on what exponents and commentators have written on the subject. To borrow and adapt a phrase from Ryle, it will be a question of mapping the territory of drama in education.³³ There are several reasons why such a map is necessary and it will not be too much of a diversion to consider those reasons because they will also influence and direct the nature of this study. Drama in education has largely developed from practical observation and experience translated into recommendations for others to adopt similar practices. This has meant that writers on the subject have tended to assert beliefs without attempting to associate them with a particular theory. Commentators on drama loosely identify the early growth of the subject with child-centred theorists like Froebel, Pestalozzi, and Montessori in a way that has become almost a cliché without examining closely the theory implicit in a particular approach to drama.

Another reason why the territory needs signposting is that most exponents of the subject who have developed thinking about drama in education have done so with little reference to their predecessors, mentioning them only in acknowledgements or bibliographies. This comment is not meant as a criticism. The rapid

33 G. Ryle, The Concept of Mind (Hutchinson, 1949), reprinted in Penguin, 1973. Ryle speaks of determining "the logical geography of concepts", (Penguin, 1973), p. 10.

development of the subject must be in part due to the fact that exponents have forged a path forward without feeling unduly limited by the thinking of others. It has meant, however, that the progress has not been a simple one of consolidating one approach and then moving to another. Not that other pedagogies develop in this ideal, neat fashion, but ideas are often subject to more public, critical debate in journals and other publications than has been the case in drama in education. One of the results of the development of drama in this way is that writers tend to make incorrect assertions about the work of past exponents, a point which will be demonstrated in this study.

Another feature of the rapid growth of the subject is that while more recent exponents are using more sophisticated language and ideas to describe the process and functions of drama, the same ideas are rarely applied to earlier exponents by way of comparison. When, therefore, the Schools Council characterises drama as "an expressive process which is best understood through the idea of symbolization and its role in the discovery and communication of meaning"³⁴, it seems fair to ask whether the same language can be used to describe the approach to drama advocated by Peter Slade or if there are crucial differences what are they? The method then which unites and compares exponents and commentators on drama by discussing their views in the context of particular concepts will more clearly compare and distinguish their work than a separate analysis of each one.

34 L. McGregor, M. Tate and K. Robinson, Learning Through Drama, Schools Council Drama Teaching Project (10-16) (Heinemann, 1977), p. 24.

The approach taken in this study will not be to assume a particular philosophical position but by focussing on particular concepts will draw on whatever philosophical discussion is relevant.

CHAPTER TWO

CONCEPTS IN DRAMA IN EDUCATION

(i) Introduction

It remains then to establish which concepts will form the major basis for the discussion by looking at the area of drama in education. This will be the purpose of the present chapter. The concept of drama itself is one which needs some consideration but it will not be identified as one of the central concepts for discussion in the main body of the thesis. The reason is that the whole study can in one sense be seen as a contribution to the understanding of what is meant by 'drama'. The first section then will not be an attempt to define drama but will rather uncover some of the problems associated with the concept which subsequent discussion in the different chapters will illuminate. The second section will identify the major concepts and will form more precisely the questions which relate to those concepts particularly in the way they are used by the exponents of the subject. In doing so it will be a question of finding the right balance, of adequately demonstrating the central importance of a particular concept in the field without preempting the main discussion which will form the basis of the entire study.

(ii) Drama

It is not the intention here to give a chronological account of the development of drama. Among such studies, Coggin has given

a detailed description of the role of drama in education from Greek times onwards.¹ Cox² has analysed the development of the subject from 1900 to 1939 in some detail and more recently Crompton³ has given a selective description and analysis of writers who have influenced the growth of the subject.⁴ John Allen's book, Drama in Schools: Its Theory and Practice⁵, includes a more personal account. Shorter surveys are to be found in Drama in Education 1⁶ and Drama and Theatre in Education⁷. All of these writers recognise the central importance of Peter Slade's Child Drama in accelerating the growth of the subject, and throughout the 1960s publications like Alington (1961)⁸, Adland (1964)⁹

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- 1 P. Coggin, Drama and Education: An Historical Survey from Ancient Greece to the Present Day (Thames and Hudson, 1956).
 - 2 T. Cox, "The Development of Drama in Education 1902-44", (University of Durham, M.Ed. thesis, 1970).
 - 3 N.J.R. Crompton, "A Critical Evaluation of the Aims and Purposes of Drama in Education", (University of Nottingham, M.Phil. thesis, May 1978).
 - 4 See also K. Robinson, "A Re-evaluation of the roles and functions of drama in secondary education with reference to a survey of curricular drama in 259 secondary schools", (University of London, Institute of Education, Ph.D. thesis, 1981).
 - 5 J. Allen, Drama in Schools: Its Theory and Practice (Heinemann, 1979).
 - 6 J. Hodgson and M. Banham (eds.), Drama in Education 1: The Annual Survey (Pitman, 1972). See especially Part 1, "From the Past to the Present".
 - 7 G. Bolton, "Drama and Theatre in Education: A Survey" in N. Dodd and W. Hickson (eds.), Drama and Theatre in Education (Heinemann, 1971).
 - 8 A.F. Alington, Drama and Education (Basil Blackwell, 1961).
 - 9 D.E. Adland, The Group Approach to Drama, Books 1-4 (Longman, 1964 to 1967).

and P. Billing and Clegg (1965)¹⁰ although mainly practical books, were confident both in their assumptions about the nature of the subject and in their theoretical claim for it.

The first D.E.S. survey on drama in 1967, however, sounded a warning note on the need for clarity of thinking, finding it surprising "to find how much time is being devoted in schools and colleges to a subject of whose real identity there is no general agreement"¹¹ and "some work that is claimed to be drama is in danger, through the looseness of the concepts underlying it, of not providing any very acceptable educational experience for the pupils".¹² Comments of this nature reappear in later publications on the subject, such as Male, "Much misunderstanding and disagreement still exists as to the nature of drama in education"¹³, and McGregor comments on the "deep divisions within the drama world".¹⁴ In the light of such comments it might be expected that publications on the subject would be partisan, dogmatic and eager to criticise the work of others but in fact this is rarely the case. The more recent writers on the subject are often eager to embrace all approaches. This is true of the Schools Council Report, Learning Through Drama, which wants the case for drama "to be sufficiently

10 R.N. Pemberton Billing and J.D. Clegg, Teaching Drama (U.L.P., 1965).

11 Department of Education and Science, Drama: Education Survey 2 (London, H.M.S.O., 1967), p. 2.

12 *ibid.*, p. 41.

13 D. Male, Approaches to Drama (Unwin, 1973), p. 9.

14 L. McGregor, Developments in Drama Teaching (Open Books, 1976), p. 18.

broadly-based to take in all examples of the work'.¹⁵

The various comments above reflect a central concern in drama in education to give an adequate account of what drama is, without being exclusively dogmatic or without extending the concept so wide that it loses any real significance. Unfortunately the problem is often identified as a need to form a definition of drama. Crompton criticises the 1967 drama survey because it "fails to define drama"¹⁶ without seeming to be aware of Allen's own discussion of the survey, "We challenged the teaching profession to define what drama is all about, side-stepping the issue ourselves ... Yet whenever I think about the matter a doubt arises in my mind. Is it even fair to ask the question?"¹⁷

The problem with forming a definition by establishing the necessary and sufficient conditions which govern the usage of the term is that a stipulative definition is likely to ignore important usages of the term, whereas a descriptive definition is likely to be too wide. Some of the definitions of drama, e.g. "Drama is a doing of life"¹⁸ hardly need criticisms they are so wide.

15 L. McGregor, M. Tate and K. Robinson, Learning Through Drama, Schools Council Drama Teaching Project (10-16) (Heinemann, 1977), p. 6.

16 N.J.R. Crompton, op. cit. (1978), p. 275.

17 J. Allen, "Notes on a Definition of Drama" in J. Hodgson and M. Banham (eds.), Drama in Education 3: The Annual Survey (Pitman, 1975), p. 102.

18 R. Courtney, Teaching Drama (Cassell, 1965), p. 5.

Different theoretical assumptions for the subject have largely depended on implicit assumptions about what drama is. These assumptions have governed the way drama has been categorised.

"Creative drama in schools, for children from the age of five to boys and girls of thirteen, fourteen or fifteen, may be artificially divided into four aspects - play, movement and mime, the various kinds of 'improvisation', and scripted plays devised and written by children. These are artificial divisions, for drama is one; all its forms may be considered as play (recreation and re-creation); movement and often mime are essential preparations for and ingredients of improvised drama and children's scripted plays; and the latter may be the consummation of satisfying improvisation."¹⁹

The quotation reflects an uncertainty about this kind of division although Alington's book and many others followed this pattern even in chapter headings. As the stress in drama moved more towards improvisation, activities such as movement and mime tended not to be given separate identification. Brian Way in Development Through Drama placed a great emphasis on exercises which he seemed to equate with drama.²⁰ More recently the stress has moved to improvised drama or 'acting out'.²¹

The problems of categorising drama is not confined to the relatively simple process of distinguishing clearly defined practical activities. Within the field of 'acting out', 'creative'

19 A.F. Alington, op. cit. (1961), p. 14.

20 B. Way, Development Through Drama (Longman, 1967).

21 L. McGregor et al., op. cit. (1977), p. 10ff.

or 'expressive' drama approaches, theoretical foundations and implicit concepts of education differ. It is misleading, therefore, to read about Dorothy Heathcote, for example, that "Though working along her own lines, her approach is not dissimilar to that of Peter Slade and Brian Way".²² Anyone reading the description of her work in Drama as a Learning Medium would be likely to sense a significant difference of approach.²³ This kind of comment is provoked by the type of categorisation which embraces various exponents under the heading 'creative drama'. Bolton's classification of dramatic activity as exercise, dramatic playing, theatre, drama for understanding is more useful in distinguishing very different approaches without relying on narrow definitions.²⁴ It seems important then to recognise the way categories reflect the manner in which the term drama has been implicitly widened, narrowed and defined. One particular characterisation of drama as play is in need of close attention.

Most accounts of the development of drama in education quote Caldwell Cook as the earliest pioneer who paved the way for the acceptance of creative drama as a subject on the school curriculum.²⁵ He usually receives acknowledgement but often little more

22 J. Hodgson and M. Banham, "The Thoughtful Playground" in Drama in Education 1, op. cit. (1972), p. 42.

23 B.J. Wagner, D. Heathcote: Drama as a Learning Medium (Washington D.C., National Education Association of the United States, 1976).

24 G. Bolton, Towards a Theory of Drama in Education (Longman, 1979).

25 H. Caldwell Cook, The Play Way (Heinemann, 1917, repr. 1966).

detailed attention. Cook's approach constitutes what he calls an "educational method"²⁶ which embraces a number of different pedagogic techniques including drama, and which recognised that learning comes from doing and from experience. It is interesting that his methodology is not based purely on an approach which seeks to use play in the classroom as a teaching technique. Cook's definition of play is very broad: "by play I mean the doing anything with one's heart in it".²⁷ He wants to inject the same kind of application, interest and happiness which he perceives in children's play into the classroom. His ideas then include not only the acting of plays but other techniques which might not normally be called either play or drama including the giving of talks by the pupils, the making of anthologies, the invention of fantasy islands, self-government in the classroom.

The way Cook uses the term play is important because it highlights a question which is rarely posed but seems to be relevant to many exponents of the subject; is the stress on play due to the fact that play has been identified as a useful pedagogic technique because it guarantees application and interest on the part of the pupil or does it come from a more deep-seated theoretical understanding of the relevance of play to the learning of the child? For example, Cook describes the difference between a class sitting in a passive manner with only half-hearted attention to the reading of a Shakespeare play and a class acting the

26 H. Caldwell Cook, *op. cit.*, p. 364.

27 *ibid.*, p. 4.

same play in a vigorous manner. The teacher has found a lively way of handling the material. On the other hand, the use of play may come from an awareness of the importance of play in concept formation, in coming to terms with reality and as such imply a real difference in approach to the actual learning process. Writers on drama sometimes describe the category 'drama as play' without adequately demonstrating whether play is being viewed as a theoretical foundation for the subject.

The "looseness of concepts" referred to in the D.E.S. survey is also illustrated in the way other exponents of the subject have used the term play. Peter Slade's thinking centred on the importance of play in the development of children. In the book Child Drama often the terms drama and play appear to be used synonymously, particularly when he describes the early stages of the child's development:

"All manifestations in which apparently the whole little body and Person are used to portray something, or in which the whole mind is concentrated on a Life situation, as in Play with dolls and toys, I would call Drama of the obvious kind."²⁸

His concept of drama is wide, "drama means doing and struggling", yet occasionally a distinction is made to suggest that there is a difference between drama and play, "Child Play may be the foundation of Child Drama, but we can help Children enormously if we understand and respect their needs and efforts, and lead without dominating."²⁹

28 P. Slade, op. cit. (1954), p. 23.

29 ibid., p. 350.

Although it is clear that Slade's theory of drama rests on the value of play it may be misleading to characterise his approach as simply 'drama as play'. That popular conception may have led to the mistaken view that Slade was anti-theatre, that he "published his views in 1954 in Child Drama edited by Brian Way, and in doing so, set the teaching of drama on a new course, away from theatre".³⁰ In fact, Slade recognised the importance of theatre but saw it as coming at the end of a developmental process through play and drama,

"And now, in arriving finally at the script play and the use of the proscenium theatre by the age of circa fifteen years, we come at last to actual intended and prepared stage presentations. They are an important though small part of the whole of Drama."³¹

And

"I think performance definitely has a part to play. This is something that people have misjudged me on in the past ... The theatre, as the grown-up understands it in all its wonder, is a conscious art form and so we should progress to it."³²

30 K. Robinson, "Drama, Theatre and Social Reality" in K. Robinson (ed.), Exploring Theatre and Education (Heinemann, 1980), p. 144. Although Robinson himself does not characterise Slade's approach as "drama as play", it is fair to suggest that this popular conception leads to misinterpretation. Robinson's thesis, *op. cit.* (1981) presents a more detailed argument than his chapter quoted here and in fact makes the point, "Slade himself ... saw a progression towards theatre in the later years of secondary education", p. 57.

31 P. Slade, *op. cit.* (1954), p. 162.

32 Interview with P. Slade, "Drama as Statutory Subject?" in Drama in Education 3: The Annual Survey, *op. cit.* (1975), pp. 86-87.

The point of course is not to argue that Slade's conception of drama does not depend on a close identification of drama and play but that to characterise the approach too simply may lead to misinterpretation.

More recent theorists like Heathcote and Bolton tend to insist on preserving a distinction between play and drama while at the same time basing their theoretical justification for the subject on the learning potential in child play. The teacher who relies on dramatic play in drama "encourages, by default, the development in his pupils of the habit of wallowing in meaningless playing ..."³³ (my italics), yet it is also claimed that play is important for learning, "play is not only being. It uses the form of being in order to explore being".³⁴ The nature of this apparent contradiction will be explored in the chapter on Learning.

Just as the relationship between drama and play as seen by exponents of the subject has implications for how the teaching of the subject is justified, so also will the relationship between drama and theatre. The issue is one which has figured as an important concern of drama exponents from its inception. Way, for example, was concerned to preserve a distinction between the two:

33 G. Bolton, op. cit. (1979), p. 29.

34 *ibid.*, p. 22.

"'Theatre' is largely concerned with communication between actors and an audience; 'drama' is largely concerned with experience by the participants, irrespective of any function of communication to an audience. Generally speaking, it is true to say that communication to an audience is beyond the capacities of the majority of children and young people, and attempts to coerce or impose communication too soon often lead to artificiality and therefore destroy the full values of the intended experience."³⁵

This type of comment, characteristic of a widespread view, reveals the concern with experience in contrast to performance. There is a tendency more recently to relate aspects of theatre (particularly theatre form) to drama teaching.³⁶

Another characteristic of more recent writing on drama has been to question the tendency of many exponents in the past to neglect theatre in the teaching of the subject. The main conclusion in an article by Robinson is that teachers of drama should include theatre activities (the watching and acting of plays) in their work as well as the more common expressive drama (the improvisation of plays and situations devised by the pupils and teacher).³⁷ It will be useful to look at some aspects of this article in detail because it neglects to take into account two important points: (a) in making curriculum recommendations of this sort considerations other than the conceptual distinction between drama and theatre need to be taken into account and (b) instead of simply discussing the relative merits of drama and

35 B. Way, op. cit. (1967), p. 2.

36 G. Bolton, op. cit. (1979), Chapter 7.

37 K. Robinson, op. cit. (1980), p. 141ff.

theatre and their common functions it may be important in making curriculum recommendations to discuss concepts of education implicit in different approaches to both drama and theatre. In other words the drama/theatre distinction in this case may be an oversimplification.

Robinson couches his discussion in terms of the difference between drama and theatre but consider the following list of activities:

- (a) expressive drama,
- (b) the sharing of work in class,
- (c) the acting of polished improvisations for the rest of the class,
- (d) the acting of polished improvisations for an audience,
- (e) the acting of scripted plays without an audience,
- (f) the watching of plays,
- (g) the acting of scripted plays for an audience,
- (h) the reading and critical analysis of plays,
- (i) participations in theatre in education.

To some people this list may seem to divide the possible activities too finely, others may feel that there are some activities omitted, but the list will serve to illustrate that in making decisions about what to include in a drama syllabus it may not be clear which of the activities (a) to (i) is to count as drama and which

as theatre. For example, is (e) the acting of scripted plays without an audience to be viewed as drama or theatre? The pupils are engaged in attempting to understand what Robinson has called "realised art forms" but we would not normally call this activity theatre. Expressive drama (a), and the reading and critical analysis of plays (h), belong more normally in Drama and English lessons respectively. Some of the other activities are not so easily placed. I suspect that many teachers would, along with (a), use (b), (c) and (d) which are more theatre orientated without including (e) to (h) in their lessons. In fact teachers might want to distinguish between the use of texts and the non-use of texts by basing their argument on more pragmatic reasoning (and one cannot fail to recognise that there may be practical reasons which are valid, e.g. pupils are not good readers, there are no texts suitable for specific age groups, and so forth). The activities (a) to (i) relate to each other by a system of family resemblances and in deciding what to include in the syllabus the drama teacher will be guided by a theoretical view tempered by practical considerations. O'Toole, in his review of Exploring Theatre and Education, rightly points out that the whole book ignores the important area of Theatre in Education³⁸, again suggesting that the distinction between drama and theatre has been made too simply.

38 J. O'Toole, Review of Exploring Theatre and Education in London Drama (Vol. 6, No. 3, Autumn 1980), p. 8.

Throughout the article there are indications that Robinson sees clear differences between theatre and drama. When discussing the capacity for dramatizing that exists in children's play and in everyday situations when we take on a role to make a point he suggests that, "It may be a large jump from this easy facility to the sophisticated artistry of the professional actor" (my italics).³⁹ Elsewhere in commenting on the lessons taught at Riverside he suggests, "The function of the drama in all of these cases was explorative. But it has other functions and markedly so when we consider its use in theatre".⁴⁰ In referring to the use by the Schools Council Drama Project of the term 'acting out' he says, "We chose to use it instead of acting because we wanted to imply a difference in function between the activity of children or adults in the classroom or workshop and the activity of the actor on the stage".⁴¹ And again, describing the difference between theatre and drama he says it lies "in the sense of convention and intention of those who are taking part".⁴² One whole section of the article is based on the difference between drama and theatre based on the influence of the existing social reality of the group. In the course of the article Robinson identifies the differences between drama and theatre but makes a curriculum recommendation for the inclusion of theatre activities without taking those differences into account.

39 K. Robinson, op. cit., p. 151. Robinson's argument is presented in more detail in his thesis, op. cit. (1981).

40 *ibid.*, p. 152.

41 *ibid.*, p. 149.

42 *ibid.*, p. 150.

When he comes to identifying the common characteristics between drama and theatre he does so by a logical sleight of hand. He introduces a third category 'dramatizing' which incorporates both activities and asks us to "set aside our distinction between drama and theatre for the moment and think of the process of dramatizing as a whole".⁴³ Not only does this beg the question but it introduces a serious problem into the argument. By identifying the roles (initiator, animator and audience) and functions (heuristic, communicative and receptive) as belonging to the whole process of dramatizing we are to include presumably the aspect of dramatizing identified earlier by Robinson which is dramatic play and the assumption of roles in everyday life:

"One of the most common techniques of everyday conversation is to slip into a role to make a point or describe an event or to depict someone we know. We take on the personalities of others to bring them to life for the listener and to add our own commentary on them through the way we represent them."⁴⁴

The argument then in favour of including theatre activities can also be an argument in favour of dramatic play, an approach to drama which Robinson criticises at some length.

Although there are important insights into the nature of drama and theatre in this article, in the last analysis there is confusion as to whether the author wishes to preserve or erode the distinction between the two concepts. Because he does not sufficiently take into account that there may be different approaches to both drama

43 K. Robinson, op. cit., p. 168.

44 *ibid.*, p. 151.

and theatre (many anti-theatre exponents were not anti-theatre per se but anti poor theatre) his argument in favour of theatre activities is weakened. The drama/theatre distinction then rather than forming the starting point for a discussion of drama may well be informed by a discussion of different approaches to drama in education.

When drama is seen primarily as the study and acting of scripted plays it is given a content which more readily identifies it as a subject. Whether drama is to be so described is another question with which a discussion of the concept drama is likely to be concerned. The 1967 survey describes drama as "less a subject than an activity ..."⁴⁵ The title of an article by Dorothy Heathcote also reflects this concern, "Drama and Education: Subject or System?"⁴⁶ Identifying syllabus content in drama often presents problems for the areas the pupils explore in their creative work are often not known in advance. How then it is often asked are teaching objectives to be specified? Solely in terms of very general aims? Is it possible to identify drama as a subject and give content to the notion of teaching that subject without identifying the subject content in terms of learning objectives? Such questions, which have a bearing on the concept of drama itself will be considered in the chapters which follow.

45 D.E.S. Survey, op. cit. (1967), p. 90.

46 D. Heathcote, "Drama and Education: Subject or System?" in N. Dodd and W. Hickson (eds.), op. cit. (1971), p. 42.

(iii) Concepts in Drama in Education: Aims, Learning, Meaning, Feeling

An examination of the justification of drama will involve inevitably looking at the various aims which writers have expounded for the subject. A philosophical investigation will not be content simply to consider and compare stated aims but will need to examine closely the concept aims and the way it is used.

It is not uncommon to find the tendency to employ very general aims criticised. Self comments, "When asked to define aims in teaching drama, we tend to rely on vague statements: 'we aim to make people better', 'we want to develop the whole child', or 'we aim to develop involvement'".⁴⁷ In making this criticism, however, Self does not give any criteria for determining what is to count as 'general' or 'vague' in talk about aims. When he comes to give his own list of twenty-nine aims many of them seem almost as vague and tied very much to personal interpretation, including "to give new experiences ... to teach awareness of others ... and to develop sensitivity". He does admit that he would be more specific if he got to know the particular class, yet the reader is given no criteria for establishing what is meant by specific aims.

It is true to say that one of the problems with stated aims is that very often these are extremely wide and very general and

47 D. Self, A Practical Guide to Drama in the Secondary School (Ward Lock Educational, 1975), p. 43.

could thereby embrace very different approaches. To use a political analogy, if one specifies that the aims of government are to bring stability to a country and happiness to the people, this in itself will not be enough to distinguish very different ideologies. Many of the stated aims for drama are as general and uncontroversial. Another problem with the concept is that very often a stated aim (e.g. to develop independent, critical thinking) is allied to practices which seem remote from achieving it (highly teacher-directed exercises).

Some of the problems with aims in drama have arisen, no doubt, because of the wide use of the concept drama which was discussed above. If the term is widened so that it becomes synonymous with 'life' or 'living' ("The dramatic play of a child is the urge to live"⁴⁸; or "(Drama) is the Art of Living"⁴⁹), it is not surprising to find exponents including as aims a wide variety of positive attributes thought desirable. Thus:

"Through dramatic play, a child gains strength and experience; his body increases in expressiveness and rhythmic control, his mind in understanding and delight in the world around him. In all his imaginings, he is linking himself with life, and gaining an understanding of the problems with which he is surrounded. He is getting not only practice in the use of his body, and of the spoken word, but also the knowledge and the intellectual stimulus which enables him to make sense of the spoken and written words

48 J. Hennessy, "The Dramatic Play of Young Children" in G. Boas and H. Hayden (eds.), School Drama: Its Practice and Theory (Methuen, 1938), p. 3.

49 P. Slade, op. cit. (1954), p. 25.

alike, for he is developing the brain behind the tongue."⁵⁰

Peter Slade's list is much longer identifying, without distinguishing, various skills ("Writing is developed, Painting is aided"), personal qualities ("Good manners are discovered"), and values which point to the therapeutic value of drama ("Love and hate can be worked off by the use of treasures").⁵¹ In the light of such a formidable list it is perhaps easy to see why Slade is characterised as "aiming consciously to help the young people come to terms with their own psychological and social problems" which represents only a narrow aspect of his view of drama.⁵²

A similar point about the relationship of the concepts drama and aims is made by Best in his discussion of movement. He describes how exponents slide inadvertently from one use of 'movement' to another:

"I have tried to show that it is only by using a sense so wide that it includes any and every conceivable sort of movement that any plausibility may be given to the huge claims sometimes made for 'movement' and 'movement education' - for example that every form of expression, indeed life itself depends upon movement."⁵³

One of the controversies in drama is not so much a disagreement about aims (they are often so uncontroversial) but a difference in

50 J. Hennessy, op. cit. (1938), p. 15.

51 P. Slade, op. cit. (1954), pp. 106-7.

52 N.J.R. Crompton, op. cit. (1978). At the start of his Chapter 10 he gives a summary of different approaches to drama.

53 D. Best, Philosophy and Human Movement (Allen and Unwin, 1978), p. 37.

view about whether it makes sense to talk of aims at all.

Crompton, for example, making indirect reference to some of the most recent writing on the subject states, "As soon as the aim is to use drama for some educational or other purpose it is distorted. Drama is not for making meaning or discovering universals or bringing achievement to the underachieving. It may happen to do such things but they are accidental by-products or simply what has to be involved in the pursuit of drama anyway. Drama is for drama".⁵⁴

Crompton can be said to be mixing up extrinsic aims, what drama is employed for (improving speech, bringing achievement to the underachieving) with what are attempts to say what drama is, i.e. what is involved in the process of drama (making meanings, discovering universals). It is also questionable whether a statement of the kind "Drama is for drama", has much significance. Perhaps the intention is to argue that any attempt consciously to pursue educational goals detracts from drama as an art form, although the point is not stated in that way. The discussion of aims in this case will be related to drama as an art and in turn to the general field of aesthetics which will be considered later.

The concept of aims, of course, is of general importance in education and the study of the way in which exponents of drama use the concept will draw on philosophy of education. This will not only inform the discussion but will set the problems and

54 N.J.R. Crompton, op. cit. (1978), p. 426.

uncertainties about the specification of aims for drama against a more general background of educational thinking. In the 1960s when drama was viewed more as a process of furthering the development of the participants, it was more common to view aims as being more or less the same as an account of the value of the process. As there has been more stress on the role of the teacher in recent years, there has been more use of the narrower term objectives in the teaching of drama. In discussing Aims it will be important to consider related terms like value, functions and objectives. They are all terms which carry the overt justification for the subject.

The emphasis on the role of the teacher corresponds with an increasing tendency among exponents of educational drama to stress learning as its major objective. This tendency is revealed in the titles of two fairly recent publications, Wagner's Dorothy Heathcote: Drama as a Learning Medium⁵⁵ and the Schools Council Report, Learning Through Drama.⁵⁶ As with aims, the concept learning is not straightforward. One problem is that there is a usage of learning which embraces the widest notion of human development. Bruner comments that "Learning is so deeply ingrained in man that it is almost involuntary, and thoughtful students of human behaviour have even speculated that our specialisation as a species is a specialisation for learning", and he goes on to refer to the idea

55 B.J. Wagner, op. cit. (1976).

56 L. McGregor et al., op. cit. (1977).

of education as a "human invention that takes a learner beyond 'mere' learning".⁵⁷ In one sense of learning then, it is possible to describe the most basic human attributes as having been learnt and if drama facilitates the acquisition of these attributes in any way it is not wrong (although it may not be very helpful) to say that learning has taken place. Thus with this conception of learning, the approaches to drama in, for example, Development Through Drama⁵⁸ and Learning Through Drama⁵⁹ (chosen here for comparison because of the obvious change of emphasis in the titles) might both be described as fulfilling learning objectives.

Perhaps what is needed then is a more precisely demarcated concept of learning akin to Vesey's often quoted definition that learning is said to have taken place if "someone has acquired, otherwise than simply by maturation, an ability to respond to a situation in a new way".⁶⁰ Unfortunately, resolution of the problem is not that easy: most definitions of learning still leave room for a wide variety of interpretations. Close scrutiny of some earlier exponents shows that 'learning' was applied to drama in different ways. "Over the course of time children will learn about contrast, climax, tension, dramatic irony, 'plugging' necessary information and other techniques of the playwright, as well as

57 J. Bruner, Towards a Theory of Instruction (Harvard University Press, 1971), p. 113.

58 B. Way, op. cit. (1967).

59 L. McGregor et al., op. cit. (1977).

60 G. Vesey, "Conditioning and Learning" in R.S. Peters (ed.), op. cit. (1967), p. 61.

some techniques of the actor and producer" (Alington)⁶¹ and Slade, "Here the Child's Drama is most essential because it is the chief medium for out-flow and it provides the actual proof trials of experiences. What is learnt is tried out. It is not far from the truth to say that without frequent opportunities for Creative Play what is learnt is never proved since it is never physically and emotionally experienced".⁶² Alington is referring to the learning of skills which belong to the medium of drama; Slade is using the term in the sense that drama consolidates what has previously been learned. It is generally accepted, however, that the characterisation of 'drama as learning' identifies a more recent change in the justification for the subject.

The Schools Council Report does acknowledge that there may be different kinds of learning that can be achieved through drama and in the course of their summary the actual term learning is used in the following ways, "learning to organize ideas into patterns ... learn to use the process ... learn the value of persevering with an activity until it is complete ... learn to co-operate and co-ordinate with other people to produce as effective an end-product as possible".⁶³ There is a significant overlap with the earlier exponents in the use of 'learning' by the Schools Council. It appears also that the authors of the report have

61 A.F. Alington, op. cit. (1961), p. 39.

62 P. Slade, op. cit. (1954), p. 54.

63 L. McGregor et al., op. cit. (1977), p. 51.

extended their conception of learning to include a wide variety of approaches to the subject, including the idea of natural development, "Some teachers feel that development occurs naturally as a result of the children's having the opportunity to explore topics and issues of interest to them and chosen by them".⁶⁴ Although the authors express a certain unease about this type of drama, ("The quality of exploration is likely to be superficial unless the teacher injects an event into the acting-out that challenges them"⁶⁵), they do include it in their account. It is not clear from the report whether the identification of learning as an objective isolates particular approaches to the subject or whether it supplies the justification for all approaches. It will be part of this study to look more closely at that question.

It is clear that Bolton in Towards a Theory of Drama in Education is more concerned to distinguish learning as pertaining to what he calls type D drama "for understanding" as opposed to other forms he identifies.⁶⁶ The relationship of those other forms of drama to type D drama is developed in the exposition of a detailed theory. He also argues that stress on learning does not detract from drama as an art form in contrast to the views held by other writers on the subject. On the other hand, two distinct approaches to the subject are sometimes identified by others: "The

64 L. McGregor et al., op. cit. (1977), p. 26.

65 ibid., p. 27.

66 G. Bolton, op. cit. (1979).

first, which I call 'learning through drama', emphasises the exploration of issues and people through drama ... The second kind of drama envisages drama as an art form in its own right".⁶⁷ It will be important to consider the distinction between drama as art and drama as learning.

In spite of the title, Drama as a Learning Medium, the term learning is not used in Wagner's book as frequently as one might expect.⁶⁸ When writing about Heathcote's justification for drama she tends to use different terms, "She uses drama to expand their awareness⁶⁹ ... to help children understand human experience from the inside out⁷⁰ ... drama is a means of using our experience to understand the experience of other people".⁷¹ Has Wagner found language which more accurately reflects the purpose drama is serving? Alternatively it might be thought that such terms are used simply for variety, pointing to an underlying concept of learning. In the chapter, "The Left Hand of Knowing", in which she describes the type of knowledge with which Heathcote is concerned (drawing from terms coined by Bruner and Ornstein⁷²),

67 L. McGregor, op. cit. (1976), p. 2.

68 B.J. Wagner, op. cit. (1976).

69 ibid., p. 15.

70 ibid., p. 33.

71 ibid., p. 58.

72 For a more detailed account, including the origins of the idea see B.J. Wagner, "Educational Drama and the Brain's Right" in R.B. Shuman (ed.), Educational Drama for Today's Schools (New Jersey and London: Scarecrow Press, 1978).

there is clear indication that 'knowing' and 'learning' are being used in a particular way, "The fiction of academic orderliness, the notion that information should be presented in only an isolated, linear, right-hand way is something Heathcote solidly rejects ... nothing is untrue if people have at some time believed it".⁷³

Without wishing to preempt the major study of learning, it seems clear even from this cursory glance that there are different emphases in the use of 'learning' both among the major publications and within the work of particular exponents. Nevertheless, as stated earlier, it is generally agreed that 'drama for learning' as a maxim does represent a significant change in the justification for the subject. It seems important then to examine and compare the nature of the justification offered by exponents. It will also be important, given the wide use of the concept, to see in what ways 'learning' can be applied to approaches advocated by earlier exponents. As with the discussion of aims, in looking at the concept it will be useful to draw on analyses and uses of 'learning' in the wider context of educational discussion and to compare it to concepts like understanding, development and conditioning, nor in order to form a precise demarcation, but to set the use of the concept learning in drama against a wider background of educational thinking and to examine what concept of education is implicit in the various uses of 'learning'.

73 B.J. Wagner, op. cit. (1976), pp. 166 and 169.

Like learning, the concept meaning occurs frequently in the more recent writing on educational drama. The concept itself is not normally scrutinised by drama exponents; there is the implicit assumption that what is meant by 'meaning' will be understood. Questions about meaning are a central concern of philosophy and are difficult. As Wittgenstein has stated, questions like "what is meaning?" are likely to produce in us a mental cramp.⁷⁴ Yet, while exponents of drama use the term meaning with the assumption that it does not need analysis, the language in which their discussions are couched is in danger of being misleading, confusing or uninformative.

The Schools Council Report defines acting-out as "the exploration and representation of meaning using the medium of the whole person".⁷⁵ Here meaning is referred to as if it is a disembodied entity which exists in some state to be considered and explored. But how can talk of meaning in that way, devoid of context, make sense? Does it refer to the meaning of the words uttered by the participants in the drama? In which case, are they explored before, after or during their utterance? Does it refer to the meaning of the whole drama? In which case, how can exploration take place prior to the completion of the drama? Participants in a drama can explore the meaning of each other's words, the words on a text, the words of the teacher, concepts, situations, actions ... but it

74 L. Wittgenstein, The Blue and Brown Books (Basil Blackwell, 1958), p. 1.

75 L. McGregor et al., op. cit. (1977), p. 16.

is difficult to see to what an exploration of meaning, devoid of context, refers. Of course, philosophers talk about meaning in the sense that they question how language can be said to have meaning but this is obviously not what the authors of the report have in mind.

Elsewhere the report uses language which also seems to imply that there is an entity, meaning, which can be explored, unearthed, represented, looked for. The teacher needs to ask how the child's own involvement in the arts can be enriched through the experience of others' work, through "an understanding and appreciation of the problems of meaning they are struggling to express".⁷⁶ Children can express thoughts, feelings, ideas, desires ... but how can they express 'problems of meaning'? When they are expressed do they still remain problems? If further evidence is needed of the curious nature of this type of language, imagine a group of pupils improvising a family scene. It would be odd if in answer to the question, 'What are you doing?' they replied, 'We are busy exploring the problems of meaning'. It might be argued that the pupils themselves are not likely to give that reply because it is a sophisticated conception. But it is hard to imagine a teacher or observer commenting that the pupils had a marvellous lesson 'exploring the problems of meaning'. If commentators are going to mention problems at all they are likely to couch their description in the terms of the context: 'They are exploring the problems of family life, of

76 L. McGregor et al., op. cit. (1977), p. 22.

adolescence, of the inter-group relations ...'. The context here, of course, includes both the make-believe and the actual relationships of the group.

Some philosophers have criticised the notion of 'subjective meaning',⁷⁷ as being incoherent yet the concept is central to Bolton's theory of drama in education. He speaks of the distinction between play and drama being centred on "the quality of the subjective meaning within the activity"⁷⁸, and in terms of the play of the child he speaks of the activity of the child as having "an internal aspect which controls the meaning of the behaviour".⁷⁹ Is Bolton guilty here of seeing meaning as corresponding to some inner mental idea or picture? Is there any philosophical justification for making a connection between meaning and 'an internal aspect' in this way? And to what does 'internal aspect' refer? Such questions need analysis.

Another problem with the notion of meaning occurs in an article in Exploring Theatre in Education which was discussed in some detail in the last section.⁸⁰ Robinson argues that teachers of drama should include theatre activities (the watching and acting of plays) in their work as well as expressive drama. What is interesting about his article for the purposes of this discussion

77 See, for example, David Best, op. cit. (1978).

78 G. Bolton, op. cit. (1979), p. 33.

79 ibid., p. 24.

80 K. Robinson (ed.), op. cit. (1980).

is the way he invokes the idea of subjective meaning to further his argument. He gives a model for our perception of the world which is drawn from Polanyi and Kelly⁸¹ which basically says that instead of being passive receptacles receiving sense impressions of the world and of events, individuals are active in the process of perception; meaning is not fixed and objective but depends on a subjective creation of meaning. One might expect, therefore, that if as Robinson states this is the "common way in which we try to make sense of everyday events and relationships"⁸² then every process of perception and articulation can be so described and analysed. When, however, Robinson criticises self-expression drama it seems that the pupils are now merely "giving out energy", engaged in "uncontrolled expressive behaviour as a reaction to a stimulus".⁸³ Again, the purpose is not to question the general conclusion of the whole argument or to question the need to distinguish approaches to drama but to question whether observations about meaning, if based on a general view of meaning, can be selectively applied to one type of drama.

In discussing meaning in this study, then, it seems important to see how the questions of meaning can be applied to various approaches to drama. If statements about meaning are offered as

81 He quotes M. Polanyi, Personal Knowledge (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958) and G. Kelly, Theory of Personality (Norton and Co., 1963).

82 K. Robinson (ed.), op. cit. (1980), p. 162.

83 *ibid.*, pp. 155 and 157.

justifications for the teaching of drama, it seems important to assess whether those statements supply a criteria for distinguishing different approaches to drama. Various problems were identified associated with the use of the term meaning. It will be important to identify and discuss the philosophical assumptions which underlie those statements.

Although specific reference to meaning is characteristic of more recent work on the subject, emotion figures as an important ingredient in the approach taken by most exponents of educational drama. At times the importance of the drama seems to be in serving some cathartic function in terms of a release of emotion. Slade comments on the process of "blowing off steam"⁸⁴ and Way speaks of drama providing "an outlet for more primitive or unpleasant emotions"⁸⁵, although neither author saw a cathartic function (in the popular sense of the term) as being the sole importance of drama with respect to emotion. Slade speaks of the child gaining emotional as well as physical control, and Way saw drama as giving the chance "for experiencing the nobler and finer emotions".⁸⁶

Another different form of emphasis is in seeing emotion in terms of general animation and excitement which should be part of the child's learning. This idea seems to have guided Caldwell Cook's approach who thought that education should be filled with

84 P. Slade, op. cit. (1954), p. 106.

85 B. Way, op. cit. (1967), p. 219.

86 *ibid.*, p. 219.

"freshness, zeal, happiness, enthusiasm".⁸⁷ Much later Haggerty was to comment that "No child could be expected to have his lessons play a meaningful part in the shaping of his life unless he were (as) emotionally excited about them ...".⁸⁸

Along with these two views of the importance of emotion in drama, the providing of cathartic release and the necessity for a general enthusiasm or excitement to animate the learning, was an increasing concern about the quality of the emotional experience attached to the process of acting or allied activities like mime. Alington speaks of the outward action being "the sign of an inward sincere emotion or feeling, genuinely imagined or experienced".⁸⁹ Pemberton Billing and Clegg claim that "this use of the creative art makes us examine what we are thinking and feeling".⁹⁰ Heathcote is described as looking for "quality of experience to plummet deep into feeling and meaning".⁹¹

What is interesting about the above quotations is that they obscure what are significant differences in the quality of the experience which are revealed in examples of practice: this has been a major problem about the question of feeling in drama. Alington describes a lesson in which the class are doing a play about looking for hidden treasure. The teacher criticises the

87 C. Cook, op. cit. (1917), p. 366.

88 J. Haggerty, Please Miss, Can I Play God? (Methuen, 1966), p. 9.

89 A.F. Alington, op. cit. (1961), p. 17.

90 R.N. Pemberton Billing and J.D. Clegg, op. cit. (1965), p. 17.

91 B.J. Wagner, op. cit. (1976), p. 13.

acting: "It wasn't clear to me that they were looking for hidden treasure. They just came in and started hunting around. Was it clear to you? ... How could they have made it clear to us that they were looking for hidden treasure? ... They didn't seem very excited when they'd dug the treasure up, and nothing much seemed to happen afterwards ..."92

Wagner gives the following description of a lesson by Heathcote. The seamen on a ship have just discovered who has killed their captain:

"They look. There is a long pause. 'So that's who did it!'
'No wonder she said she didn't want to kill any more.'
'She's the one - '
'She never said anything during the conversations about - '
'Get rid of her!'
'Throw her in the sea!' They're shouting now.
'Killing her won't do any good, 'cause that makes us all murderers, 'cause we will have killed somebody.'
'Why did you do it?'
'Yeah, why?'

Then comes the murderer's voice - quiet, steady, thoughtful:

'He never had a dream. He told me he never had a dream.' Those charts - they led to nowhere. He never had a dream.'"93

In the Heathcote example the pupils are not being asked to demonstrate a feeling whereas in the other the pupils are invited to 'seem very excited'. There is a clear difference which can be

92 A.F. Alington, op. cit. (1961), p. 44.

93 B.J. Wagner, op. cit. (1976), p. 32.

related to Bolton's observation, "In many schools we have trained children to 'switch on' imitative emotional display, so that they give a demonstration of anger and hostility in a way that has little to do with real feeling".⁹⁴

The concern then to avoid a superficial imitation of feeling in drama, although it is often easy to understand what is meant in terms of practical examples, has at times lead exponents to odd paradoxes in the way they use language to describe the drama. Thus Male claims in drama "there is no sense of 'pretending'"⁹⁵, yet surely all of drama must in a sense be pretending. Clearly the emphasis he wants is that there is no sense of pretending but the language is confusing. Pemberton Billing and Clegg claim that drama must involve "being" not "appearing to be for the sake of showing".⁹⁶ Again teachers of drama may recognise the distinction they are trying to make but it is odd to deny that all cases of drama must involve "appearing to be".

Davis, in an article entitled "What is Depth in Educational Drama?", speaks of participants experiencing 'appropriate' and 'real' emotions.⁹⁷ The use of 'appropriate' and 'real' goes in the face of normal talk and experience of emotions. Emotion is a personal, unique response to a situation and is not 'right' or

94 G. Bolton, "Theatre Form in Drama Teaching" in K. Robinson (ed.), op. cit. (1980), p.81.

95 D. Male, op. cit. (1973), p. 12.

96 R.N. Pemberton Billing and J.D. Clegg, op. cit. (1965), p. 40.

97 D. Davis, "What is Depth in Educational Drama?" in Young Drama (October 1976, Vol. 4, No. 3).

'wrong', it just happens. There is a sense in which we might describe the physical manifestations of the emotion (someone gets a fit of laughing at a funeral) as culturally inappropriate, meaning it is unexpected or not very normal, but not inappropriate in the sense that it is not the correct emotion, which is what is implied here. Yet when Davis describes what he means by inappropriate in practical terms, "when children choose to do a play about pirates and rush around the studio boarding ships, sword-fighting, escaping from sharks, etc.", it is clear what he means.⁹⁸ He speaks of 'real' emotions; talk of real emotions must allow talk of unreal emotions. But what is an unreal emotion? If it exists and is felt surely it must be real? Or is 'unreal' here referring to some sense of inauthentic emotion? Although it is clear from Davis' examples that there is a variation in the quality of dramatic experience with which the teacher must be concerned, it could well be argued that it is odd to claim as he does that participants must experience real emotions of humiliation, jealousy, loneliness, desire, fear. It is becoming apparent that a distinction needs to be made between emotion in normal everyday life and emotion in drama.

Faced with the difficulty of on the one hand, sensing the importance of distinguishing the quality of drama by reference to the feeling of the participants, and on the other hand, not

98 D. Davis, op. cit., p. 89.

finding the appropriate language to do so, exponents have turned to the field of aesthetics and in particular the work of Langer and Witkin.⁹⁹ Thus a distinction tends to be drawn between 'raw emotion' and the feeling which belongs to the arts. Symbolism has become a vital concept in understanding the nature of meaning and feeling in drama as an arts process, "Its value lies in that it gives children opportunities to explore, interpret, express and communicate feelings and ideas by representing them in a variety of symbolic forms".¹⁰⁰

Although exponents have generally recognised the importance of aesthetic questions to drama in education, there have been few attempts to relate the two fields in a thorough, systematic way. One of the few examples is Bolton's "Psychical Distance in Acting"¹⁰¹ which is a theoretical underpinning to the sort of idea expressed in the notion of "learning to distance oneself from the emotion of the moment without denying the fullness of the feeling".¹⁰²

When, however, the Schools Council Report discusses symbolization there seems to be a need for a more detailed exploration of the concept in the context of the theories which the report itself draws on. Often symbol is used as if the relationship between the symbol and that which is symbolised is clear, "The

99 S.K. Langer, Feeling and Form (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1953) and Philosophy in a New Key (Harvard University Press, 1942).
R.W. Witkin, The Intelligence of Feeling (Heinemann, 1974).

100 L. McGregor et al., op. cit. (1977), p. 206.

101 G. Bolton, "Psychical Distance in Acting" in The British Journal of Aesthetics (17, No. 1, Winter 1977).

102 B.J. Wagner, op. cit. (1976), p. 78.

situation was selected, as any range of others might have been, because it functioned as a symbol of the conflict in which the group were interested. It represented the paradox of privilege and deprivation".¹⁰³ Although reference is made to Langer, this is not the way she uses what she calls presentational symbolism. In fact, Reid criticises Langer's use of 'symbol' (not her theory) because 'symbol' has a use which is established and not applicable to aesthetics. What a symbol normally means is always conceptually distinguishable from the symbol itself but this is not the case with an aesthetic symbol: "The perceptuum does not 'symbolise' or 'mean' something else which is aesthetically and in aesthetic experience distinct from itself: aesthetic meaning is embodied".¹⁰⁴

Although thinking about the nature of feeling in drama has become increasingly sophisticated, there are still problems with this and related concepts. It will be the purpose of this study to look at the concept in detail, particularly in the context of aesthetic theory and indicate ways that aesthetic theory can be related to the development of thinking in educational drama.

Before embarking on the four concepts, a brief summary may be useful at this point. The fact that this study is an investigation means that it will not be an attempt to establish a major theoretical basis for the subject but will rather constitute a

103 L. McGregor et al., op. cit. (1977), p. 13.

104 L.A. Reid, Meaning in the Arts (Allen and Unwin, 1969), p. 198.

critical examination of the existing field. Various methods of conducting such an investigation were rejected. Criticism of a narrow linguistic approach to the philosophy of education lead to a rejection of an approach which would seek to analyse concepts like teaching, learning, education and then apply those analyses to drama. Any discussion of such concepts should take place within the context of the subject. Thus it was argued that there is an important role for philosophy in application to the teaching of subjects, not just to the philosophy of the particular subject matter. Another method of conducting this investigation would be to proceed in terms of various approaches to drama (e.g. 'drama as play', 'drama as improvisation', 'drama as theatre'). It was suggested, however, that such a procedure makes too many assumptions which an investigation of this kind should question. To conduct the investigation in terms of the writings of separate drama exponents would not give an adequate structure for comparison or for considering the philosophical problems in a unified way. Instead, four concepts were established which will provide the framework for the investigation and which will primarily be concerned with the question of the justification of drama. Such an approach will allow the study to draw widely on various relevant branches of philosophy and will form a clearer perspective by comparison on what exponents have written on the subject.

CHAPTER THREE

AIMS

(i) Introduction

The contrast between the traditional view of philosophy of education and the analytic approach which was described in Chapter One is clearly brought out in the different opinions as to how best philosophy can contribute to a discussion of aims in education. The view exists that philosophy of education should not be concerned with offering normative proposals about what the aims of education should be, which is the traditional view of the relevance of philosophy, but should be confined to clarification of the concept aims. Langford makes this contrast when he refers to the traditional concerns of philosophers who applied themselves to thinking about education and continues,

"Philosophers are nowadays inclined to be more modest in their claims, and I intend to offer no detailed proposals as to what the aims of education should be."¹

Soltis summarises the type of question which in contrast to the traditional view has engaged philosophers of education,

"As we turn now to discuss the topic of aims of education, we will not ask what is the aim of education or which aims of education are more appropriate than others, or even what aims are ultimately of value. Rather, we will look more closely at the notion of

1 G. Langford, Philosophy and Education (Macmillan, 1968), p. 46.

aim itself and follow Peters' lead in asking the prior question, 'Must an Educator Have an Aim?'"²

Criticism of this view of the philosopher's role has been discussed in Chapter One. There is an increasing tendency for philosophy of education to attend directly to normative questions. Meynell, for example, while acknowledging the relevance of Peters' comments on the concept aims continues,

"But the crucial question is, on what principle or principles one is to distinguish those aims which are proper from those aims which are not."³

This chapter then will draw on what has been written on aims in education as well as on the concept aims. Section one will consider 'aims' in relation to an approach to the subject which might be described as 'growth' drama. Here a particular perspective on 'growth' drama will be recommended in the light of difficulties associated with concepts like growth and development and which will be based on recognising a distinction between the aims and the value of drama. Section two will consider the tendency to concentrate on the functions rather than the aims of drama as exemplified by the report of the Schools Council. It will be argued that the emphasis on functions obscures the importance of teacher aims. Section three will consider another objection to the notion of aims in drama which comes from some writers who consider

2 J.F. Soltis, An Introduction to the Analysis of Educational Concepts (Addison-Wesley, 1968) p. 15.

3 H. Meynell, "On the Aims of Education", Journal of the Philosophy of Education (Vol. 10, 1976) p. 80.

that to see drama as having specific aims of one sort or another is to detract from the notion of drama as art. A discussion of the importance and relevance of aims in drama will be followed by a discussion of objectives, in particular the complexity of the relationship between means and ends and the problems raised by the tendency to look for measurable, behavioural objectives.

(ii) Aims and 'Growth' Drama

There is general agreement that the development of drama in schools this century emerged from educational theories which focused a new emphasis on the central importance of the child rather than subject matter and which embodied the belief that education should be in accord with natural development. Courtney has suggested that the development of drama, "was due to evolutionary theories which indicated that growth was natural, and that each stage of growth had to be completed before the next could be begun".⁴ In his detailed survey of the emergence of drama in the first forty years of this century, Cox describes the fertile climate provided for the emergence of drama in education by the "new educationists".⁵ One of these, Holmes, published his major work in 1911 and wrote of how teaching in the majority of schools was taking place (along) "the path of mechanical obedience"

4 R. Courtney, Play, Drama and Thought (Cassell, 1968) p. 42.

5 T. Cox, 'The Development of Drama in Education 1902-1944' (M.Ed. thesis, Durham, 1970).

as opposed to what might be, "the path of self-realisation".⁶ He was greatly influenced in the development of his ideas for the fulfilment of the latter goals by the work of Harriet Findlay Johnson who was one of the earliest exponents of the use of drama in schools this century, incorporating it as a method into her progressive teaching.⁷ The opening sentence of Holmes' book, "The function of education is to further growth", announces clearly the significant emphasis in the new approach which provided the right climate for the emergence of drama.⁸

The aims of education in what might loosely be called 'progressivism' or 'the child-centred approach' are described by White, "(education) aims at the pupils' 'self-realisation' or 'growth' or the 'fullest development of his potentialities'",⁹ and is contrasted by him with the view "that education should be centrally concerned with fostering the pupil's rationality or knowledge or intellect, not primarily for the sake of any extrinsic purpose but for its own sake".¹⁰ Current approaches to drama tend to stress the notions of 'drama for learning' or 'drama for understanding' and it would be tempting to make a simple division

6 E. Holmes, What Is and What Might Be (Constable, 1911).

7 H. Findlay-Johnson, The Dramatic Method of Teaching (London, 1911).

8 E. Holmes, op. cit. (1911), p. 3.

9 J.P. White, 'The Aims of Education: three legacies of the British idealists', Journal of Philosophy of Education (Vol. 12, 1978), p. 5.

10 *ibid.*, p. 5.

between 'growth' drama and 'drama for learning'. However, it is difficult to identify different approaches to drama underlying a statement of aims by simply contrasting the idea of development or growth with learning or fostering rationality.

Part of the problem has to do with difficulties associated with concepts like growth and development. Courtney, talking specifically about arts education, draws attention to four methods which are generally used to describe goals in educational processes: cultural transmission (education is the transmission of information and rules), romanticism (education allows the inner good to unfold), progressivism (development through the presentation of resolvable but genuine problems) and holism (the student is regarded as a whole entity rather than being constituted of various categories).¹¹ It is possible to question Courtney's somewhat arbitrary classification (to conceive progressivism solely as problem-solving may be thought to be rather narrow) but for the purpose of this discussion he makes the important point that it is a common assumption in all approaches that the pupils will develop, although the attitude to development will vary; development can variously be seen as training, as natural expression, as change or as total organic growth.

Woods and Barrow point out that the phrase 'education is growth' is ambiguous. They write:

11 R. Courtney, "Planning and Implementation of Arts Programs: A Developmental Approach and a Dramatic Model". (Mimeo, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education).

"The last phrase is Dewey's and he characterises education in terms of experience. But it is symptomatic of the danger inherent in using such slogans that Dewey seems to have been misunderstood by many who regard themselves as his followers. For many take him to have advocated the view that education is taking place (i.e. that desirable education is taking place) provided that the child is provided with an environment in which he is free to grow or in which a sequence of experiences can arise out of the child's original experience without any imposition or control on the part of the teacher."¹²

The authors go on to point out that Dewey was not using the notion of growth simply in the sense of changing from a child to an adult but took the view that the school should order the child's development through experiences on lines which broadly were based on democratic ideals.

Many contemporary exponents of drama, while acknowledging a movement away from 'growth' drama would consider themselves in some way child-centred and few would avoid terms like growth and development. Because of the ambiguities attached to these concepts it will be necessary to look more closely at exponents of drama to see whether the division between 'growth' drama and 'drama for learning' can be seen to have real significance in terms of implicit concepts of education or whether alternative perspectives are more fruitful.

There were relatively few books published on drama in the forty year period after Holmes' What Is and What Might Be although there was a growing emphasis on the subject in official reports

12 R.G. Woods and R.St.C. Barrow, An Introduction to Philosophy of Education (Methuen, 1975), p. 138.

and conferences which Cox details. It was the publication of Peter Slade's "Child Drama" in 1954 which was based on many years of practical work and observation which provided a significant impetus to the growth of the subject.¹³

Slade's book is generally seen as marking a significant development for two related reasons. In the first place, the emphasis changed from drama which involved some kind of performance (even if this was just in the classroom) to a style of work which retained its spontaneity when it was conceived as existing for its own sake and not for the sake of an audience. Secondly, he associated child drama more closely with children's natural play. Thus there exists a perspective or a view of the development of drama which sees Slade as an innovator when his work is characterised as 'drama as play' or 'drama without theatre'. I want to suggest that this commonly accepted view of the development of the subject has misleading consequences. Although Slade was an innovator in terms of a practical approach to the subject, a perspective which looks at underlying principles will link him more clearly with previous approaches to the subject in terms of the implicit notion of what 'education' was thought to mean. A perspective of this kind is not simply of historical interest for it will be argued that many contemporary disagreements in approaches to the subject centre on practical issues and do not take sufficient account of the educational implications of a particular approach.

13 P. Slade, Child Drama (University of London Press, 1954).

British educationists of the early part of the century developed their own individual theories but the influence of earlier educational reformists on the continent is generally acknowledged. Of these it is particularly interesting to compare the thinking of Rousseau, who has been described as the "father of progressivism" with that of Slade.¹⁴ In Child Drama observation of the natural activity of the child, details of which constitute part 1 of the book, provides the important key for the approach of the teacher which is described in part 2. The important conclusion which emerges from that observation is that there exists a Child Drama which is an Art Form in its own right which shall be "recognised, respected and protected".¹⁵ It is the job of the teacher to nurture this natural propensity of children. Although Rousseau makes little reference to dramatic play, the underlying idea that the education of the child must be true to his nature is an essential part of his philosophy. Slade's comment that "there are two points of view, and the Child has one, to which, in all justice, it has an equal right"¹⁶, is reminiscent of Rousseau's comment, "Childhood has its own ways of seeing, thinking and feeling; nothing is more foolish than to try and substitute our ways".¹⁷ As well as the implicit idea in Slade's

14 G.H. Bantock, Education and Values (Faber, 1965), p. 13, as quoted by I. Morrish, Disciplines of Education (Allen and Unwin, 1967), p. 85.

15 P. Slade, op. cit. (1954), p. 68. (Part 1 is called "Observation", Part 2 is called "The Teacher").

16 *ibid.*, p. 21.

17 J.J. Rousseau, Emile, translated by B. Foxley (Everyman, Dent, 1911), p. 54.

book that the child should follow his natural inclinations there are explicit references to nature. When he talks in very practical terms about not providing too many props or clothes because these may stultify creative energy, he points to the fact that man in his natural state will do without if necessary. Even his notion of the therapeutic value of drama is tied in with the notion of what is natural, "the Arts are increasingly employed as therapy. But nature provides the simple preventative. It is for us to provide the opportunity".¹⁸

Courtney has drawn attention to the fact that Slade has close links with Rousseau but he has also made the following comment, "For Rousseau, a child's early education should be almost entirely of play".¹⁹ This latter statement, although accurate, could be misleading by placing the wrong kind of emphasis. A reading of Emile reveals that Rousseau's concern is not primarily to promote play itself but rather this comes as a consequence of his concern to avoid any imposition which will interfere with natural growth until the age of reason,

"If the infant sprang at one bound from its mother's breast to the age of reason, the present type of education would be quite suitable, but its natural growth calls for quite a different training ... Therefore the education of the earliest years should be merely negative."²⁰

18 P. Slade, op. cit. (1954), p. 104.

19 R. Courtney, op. cit. (1968), p. 20.

20 J.J. Rousseau, op. cit., p. 57.

The important emphasis is first on natural growth rather than on play as such but of course as it happens a child left to his own devices will naturally play. This is the assumption certainly.

The point is more than just a quibble about some sort of conceptual ordering. There is a difference between advocating a play method which seeks to use play to achieve particular goals and encouraging play because it is a natural form of activity which will allow natural growth, (although both approaches tend to use the term growth or development).

This distinction can be seen clearly if an example is quoted which contrasts the use of 'playing shops' to teach number as opposed to play which lacks external structure. However, the difference is not always this clear. In the most spontaneous of play the environment which in a school context will be determined by the teacher is bound to influence and determine the nature of the play. Does not this fact contradict the idea of natural activity? It is a problem for neither Slade nor Rousseau because for both there is a double edge to the concept of what is natural. For Rousseau the adult has to protect the child from the unnatural influences of society so that natural growth is not the same as leaving him completely on his own: "Under existing conditions a man left to himself from birth would be more of a monster than the rest".²¹ Similarly, in Slade, there is the idea that play

21 J.J. Rousseau, op. cit., p. 1.

left alone may develop badly; the teacher has a protective influence:

"Play is natural to the Child, but Play left entirely alone often tends to become more violent as the Child grows older. Play associated continually with beauty, and with the treasure of knowledge through the agency of an understanding adult mind, leads to better creation, more joy, has a marked effect on behaviour and results in the more discernible phenomenon of an Art Form."²²

It will be apparent that the concept of what is natural is becoming increasingly slippery.

To characterise Slade's approach as 'drama as play' is to stress the new direction he gave to the subject but to describe his concept of education as 'growth' (once the ambiguities are clarified) is to link him with earlier thinking on the subject. For example, the anthology edited by Boas and Hayden, published in 1938, although it is largely concerned with theatre and performance of some form, is largely motivated by ideas of free expression and self expression.²³

On the role of the teacher, Slade claims that this should be special but not dominating, but throughout the book he is concerned with minimising that influence. He uses the word 'nurture' a good deal and explains what he means, "So much is done by them, of themselves, for themselves. We only offer opportunity, by sympathy and common sense. Thus do we nurture".²⁴

22 P. Slade, op. cit. (1954), p. 342.

23 G. Boas and H. Hayden, School Drama: Its Practice and Theory (Methuen, 1938).

24 P. Slade, op. cit. (1954), p. 122.

He wants the teacher to "avoid too many fussy, unnecessary suggestions"²⁵ and to "learn when not to (make suggestions)".²⁶ The teacher is seen primarily as a kindly, gentle guide; many lessons are criticised because of teacher interference. The underlying principle which is implicit in Slade's approach is an explicit part of Rousseau's philosophy.

There is also a similarity of tone in their writing. Some of Rousseau's directives, "Love childhood ... Why rob these innocents of the joys which pass so quickly, of that precious gift which they cannot abuse?"²⁷ could have been taken from Child Drama. Even criticism directed at one of them, "Rousseau, like most enthusiastic pioneers, overstated his case"²⁸ can be levelled at the other. Slade in his efforts to justify the value of drama makes some odd claims. He suggests that the practice drama can give in opening and closing doors can be very useful because, "Sometimes doors alter one's whole career"²⁹, and he describes the girl who has not had much drama in school as being one who "tends to enter the youth club as emotionally unstable, often unreliable, giggly, and often addicted to an inhibited form of jive, bebop or the current craze in hot dancing".³⁰

25 P. Slade, op. cit. (1954), p. 131.

26 *ibid.*, p. 140.

27 J.J. Rousseau, op. cit., p. 43.

28 I. Morrish, *Disciplines of Education* (Allen and Unwin, 1967), p. 100.

29 P. Slade, op. cit. (1954), p. 159.

30 *ibid.*, p. 123.

The exponents of drama characterised as having 'growth' aims reduced emphasis on the role of the teacher in the drama process. This can be seen clearly in the work of Slade and practical books which followed made a similar point. Courtney comments, "They may come and ask the teacher for advice, but he should only stick his adult nose into their private world where it is absolutely necessary".³¹

It is perhaps worth making an aside comment here on the historical influences on the growth of the subject. Froebel is generally accorded a significant influence on the development of drama: Crompton, in his thesis, calls him the "father of educational drama".³² Yet Slade seems closer to Rousseau. The authors of a history of educational ideas describe Froebel's use of "gifts" (shapes used for constructional activity), dancing, singing, number games, drawing and games involving speech and continue:

"Stated thus badly, it might appear that the school has the task of producing educated youngsters through a timetable of unlimited free play. Nothing was further from Froebel's thoughts, yet it is here that his ideas have sometimes been misinterpreted. It is true that Froebel is the great exponent of the fundamental use of play in education, but he envisaged activities both guided and progressive. By stressing the purposive element in activity he made possible the identification of play and work as one. The teacher's task is to organise and guide the free and continuous development of the pupil through play - a gradual development of self-activity, never forced."³³

31 R. Courtney, op. cit. (1965), p. 21.

32 N.J.R. Crompton, "A Critical Evaluation of the Aims and Purposes of Drama in Education" (M.Phil. thesis, University of Nottingham, 1978), Chapter 4, p. 62.

33 S.J. Curtis and M.E.A. Boulwood, A Short History of Educational Ideas (University Tutorial Press, 1953), p. 379.

To return then to the main argument, the observation that the 'growth' approach to drama reduced emphasis on the role of the teacher (which is what would be expected with an approach which implicitly was associated with a Rousseauesque model of natural growth) goes some way to clarifying the ambiguities. However, in forming a more detailed account of 'growth' drama, it is not enough simply to speak in terms of whether the teacher has an active or passive role.

Brian Way's approach to teaching drama was a significant influence on the development of the subject.³⁴ He describes the purpose of drama by referring to the idea of the development of the whole person, and he is generally associated with the work and ideas of Slade. His book, however, which is primarily a guide to practical activity, is concerned with the specification of teacher-directed exercises and activities. It is possible to explain the development of Way's work and its relationship with that of Slade by pointing out that Way had a theatre background, many of his exercises are reminiscent of those of Stanislavsky³⁵, and he seemed to meet a need of teachers in providing a ready guide to structured classroom activity - the popularity of his influence is a testimony to that fact. It is more difficult, however, to find a way of describing their work which draws attention to the similarity of underlying principle without resorting to vague

34 B. Way, Development Through Drama (Longman, 1967).

35 C. Stanislavsky, An Actor Prepares, translated by E. Hapgood (Geoffrey Bles, 1937).

concepts. The claim has been made by Courtney that Way relates closely to "modern forms of existentialism" in contrast to Slade's "romantic base in the style of Rousseau"³⁶, but there are closer similarities in their approaches which this description obscures. I wish to argue that it is possible to see both their approaches as belonging to the 'growth' school by thinking not in terms of whether the teacher is active or passive but whether the teacher can rightly be described as having aims. To develop this point a closer look at the concept aims is necessary.

Discussions of the concept aims in philosophy of education invariably centre on the fact that the use of 'aims' normally implies a target. Peters' comment, "The concept of 'aim' always carries with it some of the nuances associated with its natural home in contexts of shooting and throwing"³⁷ is similar to Langford's description which has the added idea that 'aim' implies the possibility of failure, "To aim is to try to hit something, but it is not necessarily to succeed in doing so".³⁸ Schoffield devotes a section of his chapter on aims to an "analysis of the metaphorical idea of aim as a target".³⁹ The purpose of stressing this aspect of the concept aim is usually to explain the point

36 R. Courtney, "Goals in Drama Teaching", Drama Contact (Council of Drama in Education, 1, 1, May 1977).

37 R.S. Peters, "Aims of Education - A Conceptual Inquiry" in R.S. Peters (ed.), The Philosophy of Education (O.U.P., 1973), p. 13.

38 G. Langford, op. cit. (1968), p. 51.

39 H. Schoffield, The Philosophy of Education (Allen and Unwin, 1972), p. 96.

of the type of question Peters asked, "Must an educator have an aim?"⁴⁰ The point in question is that if education is a normative concept then 'aim' may be a misleading term to use in that it implies the aims of education are extrinsic to the process itself.

Associating the concept aims with an analysis of 'education' in this way has concentrated attention on the fact that talk of aims tends to involve the specification of goals to be achieved through certain activities. Sockett, however, has drawn attention to an important aspect of the concept when he puts the notion of intentional human activity at the centre of his account. Of course it is common to speak of the aims of education, the aims of institutions, the aims of drama but these he suggests do not present a problem,

"I will simply assert that such talk is in the case of institutions logically reducible to that of members of institutions, and in the case of activities to that of participants in the activity, and there may be nothing much to worry about philosophically in that."⁴¹

The emphasis Sockett places on the intentional aspect of aims will be important to this discussion because a distinction between talk of 'aims of drama' and 'aims of the teacher' will be useful in forming a perspective on the development of the subject.

40 R.S. Peters, Authority, Responsibility and Education (Allen and Unwin, 1959).

41 H. Sockett, "Curriculum Aims and Objectives: Taking a Means to an End", Journal of Philosophy of Education (Vol. 6, No. 1, 1972), pp. 34-35.

In forming a more detailed account of 'growth' drama, it is not enough simply to speak in terms of whether the teacher has an active or passive role, but whether the teacher can rightly be said to have aims if the concept aims is being used to identify a relationship between agent, activity and goal. For the moment that formulation will be left vague because a number of questions are raised to do with the complexities of the notion of intention and the relationship between means and ends which will be discussed later but an idea of what is meant can be described by making reference to drama.

Many approaches to drama which embodied a 'growth' concept of education see the teacher as being active but do not link the agent with the stated goals. It is interesting to compare Way's use of exercise (which is a large part of his book) to that described by Bolton who makes one of the defining characteristics of exercise drama that it has a sense of purpose.⁴² In fact the point being made can be explained more clearly by contrasting 'growth' approaches to the work of more recent exponents who see the role of the teacher as being a vital part of the learning process. Both Bolton and Heathcote in their drama work do not simply structure situations which allow for the growth of the pupils but are constantly intervening in the drama to influence

42 G. Bolton, Towards a Theory of Drama in Education (Longman, 1979), Chapter 6. Stanislavsky's exercises too were drawn up with a sense of purpose in mind. It is probably fair to say that much exercise drama in schools lacks a sense of purpose.

the learning: their extensive use of teacher role play in their teaching is one indication of this. Descriptions of lessons in the Inner London Drama Guidelines reveal the important role of the teacher in the lesson in creating the learning situations.⁴³ Similarly, much of what is written in Learning Through Drama reveals the importance of the role of the teacher although there is a certain ambivalence in this publication which will be described.⁴⁴

To summarise, what is being suggested here is that a way to view the development of drama is to think in terms of the aims of the teacher when the concept aims is duly qualified as described: i.e. 'aim' represents a relationship between agent, activity and goal which is not found in 'growth' approaches. (That precise relationship will depend on further examination of aims and intention and learning outcome). Taking this view, two books published in 1965 with interestingly enough the same title, Teaching Drama, can be seen to be tending in different directions. Courtney's book⁴⁵, as has been suggested, limits the role of the teacher, whereas Pemberton Billing and Clegg were beginning to stress the role of the teacher in the education process, seeing the teacher's job as being to discipline and direct the drama:

43 C. O'Neill et al., Drama Guidelines (Heinemann, 1976).

44 L. McGregor et al., Learning Through Drama, Schools Council Drama Teaching Project (10-16) (Heinemann, 1977).

45 R. Courtney, op. cit. (1965).

"Drama then becomes a positive educational force, not merely a useful but haphazard way of learning".⁴⁶ It becomes inappropriate to speak of early drama exponents as having aims. Hence speaking about the aims of drama rather than the aims of the teacher can be seen to have a certain significance because what was meant in the former case was something more like a specification of what the values of drama were. If drama was in some sense defined as 'life' it is clear to see why such extravagant claims were made for the subject.

There is no evidence to suggest that these exponents thought very consciously about the terms they were using and it is unlikely that they did. What is interesting, however, is that alternative terms are often used rather than 'aims' particularly for the titles of chapter headings. Slade speaks of the aims and values of Child Drama and it is fair to judge his account as being more accurately described as 'values'. Way gives the title "The Functions of Drama" to the relevant chapter in his book.

(iii) Functions

A more recent approach to the subject which places stress on functions rather than aims is taken by the report of the Schools Council.⁴⁷ It becomes apparent in their discussion, however, that

46 R.N. Pemberton Billing and J.D. Clegg, Teaching Drama (University of London Press, 1965), p. 21. In the light of what has been said about the need for conceptual clarification, it is interesting to note the contrast here between 'educational force' and 'haphazard way of learning'.

47 L. McGregor et al., op. cit. (1977).

the authors are using the term functions in a particular way. Very often talk about the functions of an object or activity refer to the purpose it is made to serve which is not necessarily a defining characteristic, e.g. a piece of wood may function as a door-stop or a paper weight; the function of a game in a lesson may be to settle an active group at the start or to fill in time at the end. The Schools Council report does not use 'function' in this sense but rather to define the unique characteristics of drama, the way drama functions per se. It will be useful to examine what the report says about functions in the light of their comments on aims.

The authors of the report identify aims for drama commonly offered by teachers such as "developing the child's powers of self-expression ... developing self-awareness, self-confidence ..." and go on to comment as follows:

"These are very general statements, of course, but they raise a number of immediate issues concerning the role and development of drama. Many of the aims of drama teachers are not unique to drama. Philosophically at least, drama is part of a much more general movement in education."⁴⁸

The report goes on to ask what distinctive and specific contributions drama can make and continues:

"This seems to be a question of defining clear aims. Are there within the general sorts of aims given above more specific aims which are exclusive to drama? Much of the debate in drama centres on this problem of defining clearer aims."⁴⁹

48 L. McGregor et al., op. cit., p. 4.

49 ibid., p. 4.

The authors suggest that in defining a role for drama teaching it might be more useful to look at the functions of the drama experience. It will then be up to the individual teacher to answer the question, "Are these functions, these developments, in line with what he is generally trying to achieve in education as a whole?"⁵⁰

The authors define the essential characteristics of drama as being a process involving acting-out and therefore the functions of drama will depend on the functions of acting-out: "Whatever acting-out involves for those who do it, why should children or adults be asked to act-out in the first place? What are its possible functions? What promise, what value does it hold for education?"⁵¹ The use of the term functions here does sound very much as if it is referring to the purposes, uses or values of acting-out but the authors of the report generally want to use the term in a more descriptive way. The point they want to make is that the value of drama will very much depend on the nature of drama, "the key to the problem of defining drama, and its possible value in education, lies in what children and adults alike actually do in drama, and in the nature of the experience itself".⁵²

It is in answering the question 'what are the functions of drama?' that the report gives its important analysis of the nature

50 L. McGregor et al., op. cit., p. 5.

51 *ibid.*, p. 13.

52 *ibid.*, p. 10.

of drama as a symbolic art form which will be the subject of a detailed discussion elsewhere in this study. What is important here is the way 'aims' relates to 'functions' in the book. After their discussion of the nature of drama (its functions) in chapter one, the report returns to a consideration of teacher aims in chapter two, Learning Through Drama:

"In the last chapter we defined what we meant by 'drama' and discussed what its value in education might be. We suggested that the process of acting-out involves the exploration and representation of meaning through the medium of the whole person and that this is done through social interaction. In view of this, what kinds of learning should result from involvement in drama?"⁵³

(my italics).

What the authors of the report do is move from a description of the functions of drama to a description of the learning which will result and only then return to the notion of aims,

"To some extent all these kinds of learning occur when acting-out takes place. Some, however, may be stressed more than others. Depending on what teachers specifically want to achieve at a given time, different aspects of the process will be emphasised to achieve those aims."⁵⁴

It seems fair to claim that the value of drama and its unique role in education will depend in part on the nature of the process but in making the aims subordinate to functions there is some equivocation about the importance of the role of the teacher in the learning process which is particularly revealed in the examples of lessons given. This approach differs in an important respect

53 L. McGregor et al., op. cit., p. 25.

54 *ibid.*, p. 25.

from Bolton's which sees the learning potential as depending on the quality of the acting-out which in turn will depend to a large degree on the teacher:

"I tend to work on the assumption that most children, left to themselves, will not create drama that goes beyond what they know. Most children need a teacher, a teacher whose role is more than that of facilitator; they need a teacher whose perspective of the world stretches beyond their own, whose understanding of what will make drama work is greater than their own and who has the skill to tap what they know in the service of what they are ready to know."⁵⁵

The report's initial dissatisfaction with aims is because these do not generally define the uniqueness of drama's contribution to learning. The point, however, about aims is that they provide an indication of the broad rationale motivating the teacher's work. The use of 'function' obscures the fact that it is the teacher who intends, consequently there is some ambiguity about the role of the teacher in the report. 'Function' appears to liberate the whole process from subjective, individual aims. Of course, introducing the notion of intention raises a great deal of problems which need to be discussed because of the intricacies of this particular concept.

(iv) Aims and Objectives in Drama

It was suggested that a useful perspective on the development of approaches to drama is to see 'growth' drama as properly being described without reference to aims: it is more useful to speak of

55 G. Bolton, "Some Notes Prepared for London Teachers of Drama" (Mimeo, University of Durham, 1973).

the value of the drama because this terminology reveals more clearly the new direction given to the subject. It is worth drawing attention, however, to a different, prescriptive view which is that drama should not serve any educational purpose and should not be conceived of in terms of aims. Crompton, for example, makes the complaint that drama is "almost always being used for something rather than as something"⁵⁶ and argues that the Newsom report "degraded the arts to the level of some kind of poorly conceptualised therapy for the control of stupid adolescents".⁵⁷ The idea that drama is not for anything re-appears throughout his study and it becomes clearer that what he is concerned with is to retain the integrity of drama as art: "Drama is for drama. It is an expression, like any other human activity or art, of human nature, and as such it has its own qualities and characteristics".⁵⁸

The first point to be made here is that there is no logical reason why drama if used for a particular purpose need necessarily be distorted as an art form. A producer of a play may have as his primary aim that his work should make money but that aim need not interfere with the work of art unless the play is distorted and adapted purely to appeal to a wide audience.

The more serious question then is not that drama should not serve an educational purpose but that the art form should not

56 N.J.R. Crompton, op. cit. (1978), p. 260.

57 *ibid.*, p. 297.

58 *ibid.*, p. 426.

suffer in the process. This is a view which has been part of Allen's thinking,

"... If I appear to undervalue the way in which drama is used to help personal development, to establish social attitudes, to provide experience in various democratic procedures such as decision-making it is not because I do not realise the importance of these educational experiences but simply because they become the less significant if, as so often happens, the nature of the expressive form that is being used to provide these experiences is itself minimized or devalued."⁵⁹

It should be noticed that Allen is not saying that drama should not provide the experience identified but that the dramatic form should not thereby be devalued. The question which needs to be explored is whether this does happen when drama is used in an educational context, whether this has tended to happen in the history of the subject.

The view that 'drama is for drama' and not 'for education' has both an implicit assumption about the nature of art as well as an implicit concept of education. A statement of aims can be seen as giving explicit content to what 'education' is thought to mean. This idea seems close to Peters' argument when he asks whether it makes sense to speak of aims in education. This was the view that because education is a normative concept, specification of aims is simply a way of being more precise about what is meant by education.

59 J. Allen, Drama in Schools: Its Theory and Practice (Heinemann, 1979).

Of course the emphasis in Peters' account is that the further specification of the aims of education is unnecessary because one merely has to analyse the logic of education. Peters' normative view of the concept education has been challenged by, among others, Woods on the basis of a general difficulty of philosophical analysis.⁶⁰ It is wrong to imagine that one can analyse the concept of education. It is possible to point to different uses of 'education', some of which are non-normative. Haack's criticisms of Peters' notion of conceptual truth and his essentialist emphasis which seems to be seeking necessary conditions for saying what constitutes education or being educated, were discussed in an earlier chapter.

Another way of expressing this view is to describe education as an essentially contested concept, described as follows:

"We find groups of people disagreeing about the proper use of the concepts, e.g. of art, of democracy, of the Christian tradition. When we examine the different uses of the terms and the characteristic arguments in which they figure we soon see that there is no one clearly definable general use of any of them that can be set up as the correct or standard use. Different uses of the term 'work of art' or 'democracy' or 'Christian doctrine' subserve different though of course not altogether unrelated functions for different schools or movements of artists and critics, for different political groups and parties, for different religious communities and sects."⁶¹

60 J. Woods, "Commentary on Peters' Aims of Education - A Conceptual Inquiry", in R.S. Peters (ed.), op. cit. (1973).

61 A. Hartnett and M. Naish, Theory and the Practice of Education, Vol. 1 (Heinemann, 1976), p. 80. See also W.B. Gallie, "Essentially Contested Concepts", in Proceedings of the Aristotelean Society (Vol. LVI, 1955-6), p. 168.

It is dangerous to generalise too far about Peters' views because it is clear that these have been modified under criticism of the type mentioned. He seems, for example, in a later article to be more ready to accept a family resemblance view when he speaks of the concept of education as being fluid:

"At one end of a continuum is the older and undifferentiated concept which refers just to any process of bringing up or rearing in which the connection either with what is desirable or with knowledge is purely contingent. There may be uses which link it just with the development of desirable states without any emphasis on knowledge; there may be uses which pick out the development of knowledge without implying its desirability. The more recent and more specific concept links such processes with the development of states of a person that involve knowledge and understanding in depth and breadth and also suggests that they are desirable."⁶²

If two exponents A and B differ fundamentally about the role of drama as a process of education, there are two ways of characterising their differences. A may claim that he does not share B's aims for drama, or alternatively he may claim that B's drama is simply not education. In the second case he is taking a normative view of education; specification of aims may be seen as giving explicit content to the education component in 'educational drama'.

The absence of aims in drama can mean that method and content can be elevated to the status of guiding principles, instead of being subordinate to more general aims. In her book published in

62 R.S. Peters, "Further Thoughts on the Concept of Education", in R.S. Peters (ed.), *op. cit.* (1973), p. 49.

1976 McGregor defines the two main areas of controversy in drama as being whether to show work or not in class and what place discussion should occupy in the lesson.⁶³ Some teachers express uncertainty about whether lessons should be preplanned or whether they should always begin with an open question to the class, "What should we do a play about?" Similarly, controversy has centred on whether texts should or should not be used in a lesson. In the absence of a clear perspective on the growth of the subject, such questions are often treated as if they are fundamental. Hence the importance of a perspective which looks at the underlying concept of education implicit in the approach.

A statement of aims by a teacher can be taken to represent both an identification of his role as an intentional agent in the learning process as well as an indication of the general goal towards which the educational process is directed. Among drama exponents two objections to aims were identified: that they are too general and do not identify the unique contribution of drama. It is for this reason that the discussion of aims is far from complete because it will be necessary to consider the notion of objectives in relation to the teaching of the subject.

The call for more precise objectives in drama can be seen in terms of a wider development in education as a whole and is generally associated with the movement towards rational planning of the curriculum. Sockett describes the development as follows:

63 L. McGregor, op. cit. (1976), Chapter 3.

"The advocate of Rational Curriculum Planning exhorts the teacher to distinguish his general aims from his specific objectives: he will suggest that general aims should be broken down into or translated into specific objectives or that specific objectives should be chosen in the light of general aims. Aims are rather out of fashion in Curriculum Theory these days whereas objectives are de rigueur."⁶⁴

Consideration of objectives opens up a wide area for it takes the discussion more directly into curriculum planning on which there has been a proliferation of literature in the last twenty years. It will not be the purpose here to give a survey of all the relevant discussion which has centred on objectives in education but rather to draw on what is considered appropriate for this discussion of drama. Of course, much of the literature is concerned with more general curriculum planning and it is worth making that clear from the outset because much of what will be applied to drama was conceived as part of a more general process of planning in education.

One way of looking at objectives is to see them as coming at a stage in planning which relates aims to content and method more easily and specifically: "for curriculum planning to be rational, it must start with clear and specific objectives and then, and only then, address itself to discovering the plan of means, the content and method in terms of which these objectives are to be obtained".⁶⁵ This quotation from Hirst and the former from Sockett indicate the important position objectives occupy in relating aims to content and method.

64 H. Sockett, op. cit. (1972), p. 30.

65 P. Hirst, "Philosophy and Curriculum Planning", in Knowledge and the Curriculum (Routledge, 1974), p. 3.

The call for more precise objectives was partly due to the influence of behaviourists and partly due to the need teachers felt for a more clear direction to their work. If objectives refer mostly to the change in behaviour that it is hoped will be brought about by the learning process, they are very specific and easily tested. Teachers who were admonished that they must replace vague aims with a more specific account of what they were trying to achieve might well have been attracted by the type of model advocated by the behavioural objectives approach.

If such an approach to planning education were widespread it is easy to imagine drama teachers, if not being seduced by such attempts at precise planning, at least quietly envying the specific way other teachers could set about their teaching.

Of course, a large number of exponents deny that it is appropriate to speak about behavioural objectives in the context of the arts, even if one were to accept that such an approach might work for some subjects. In the context of drama this fact is sometimes stated. Wagner, talking about Dorothy Heathcote comments, "In the category of goals she dare not set are what we in American educational circles might call 'measurable behavioural objectives'".⁶⁶ In America where the movement towards behavioural objectives has been strong in the past, pioneers of 'creative dramatics' like Winifred Ward have resisted their influence.

In view of this, it may seem that behavioural objectives (or the even more precise notion of 'measurable, behavioural objectives')

66 B.J. Wagner, op. cit. (1976), p. 225.



should not be given much attention at all in the context of drama. If drama is seen as an expressive art form primarily concerned with feeling, the need for a statement of objectives in this way seems inappropriate. In the context of the 'growth' approach to drama this comment seems reasonable. The point, however, is that while the aims of drama are being stated in terms of learning and understanding then those concepts need to be given further content. There are implications not only for the way drama is to be justified but ultimately where it is to find its place on the curriculum. If drama cannot be conceived of in terms of behavioural objectives, must the notion that it involves learning be abandoned?

There have been many challenges to the assumptions made by those who would plan the curriculum by specification of behavioural objectives in this way, many of those objections on philosophical grounds. One such challenge was made by Pring who directed his criticisms specifically against Bloom's taxonomy; he argues that the whole approach does not have a sound base in epistemology. One criticism he makes is to question the whole cognitive/affective distinction in specifying objectives:

"It does not make sense to have knowledge as one's objective - the undifferentiated way in which we come to understand both ourselves and our environment - without the caring about those standards of truth and correctness which are built into what it means to know and to understand and appreciate. To think scientifically entails a concern, a feeling if you like - for the standards of scientific truth."⁶⁷

67 R. Pring, "Bloom's Taxonomy - a philosophical critique", Cambridge Journal of Education (No. 2, Easter 1971), p. 86.

Pring also questions the conception of knowledge embodied in this approach and the distinction made between knowledge and intellectual abilities when they are listed in a hierarchical form, e.g. comprehension, application, analysis ... knowledge entails "... understanding what it means to say that something is the case and this in turn entails being able to apply this knowledge to particular situations".⁶⁸

Another implicit criticism comes from Sockett when he questions many of the assumptions underlying curriculum planning by recommending a more sophisticated view of what is involved in a means/end approach.⁶⁹ A common view is that the teacher will specify the change in behaviour he wants to bring about as an end and then chooses the means by which these objectives might be reached. This relationship is normally conceived as being contingent but Sockett demonstrates that the relationship between means and ends may be more complex. The means may be a logical precondition of the end or the means may be part of the end. This latter case is particularly important for drama when an objective like 'to develop an increased understanding of x' is not distinguishable as an end distinct from means.

Enough has been said to show that the challenge to the expression of objectives in behavioural terms is considerable and indeed any oversimplified model is likely to present problems. Objectives expressed in behavioural terms are only likely to be applicable in a very narrow concept of education which sees

68 R. Pring, op. cit., (1971), p. 88.

69 H. Sockett, op. cit. (1972).

education as a training in skills but even here there may be limitations to their use. In the context of drama the tradition of speech training could be so described particularly that which laid stress on the quality of voice,

"If sufficient attention is paid to voice as the instrument of speech, rather than to the speech itself, many difficulties will be avoided, and the work based on the firm foundation of physiological laws rather than on the shifting sands of personal opinion."⁷⁰

The teacher here was to be concerned with training the use of the vocal organs but the author of the publication from which this quotation is drawn herself recognised the limitations of thinking purely in terms of objective skills,

"Any tendency to regard speech as an end in itself should be banished at the outset, for it must be remembered that its function is to provide man with a means of communication, both of his own ideas and thoughts, and those of the poets and writers - the people whose work he may seek to interpret."⁷¹

Downey and Kelly make the point that particularly in the United Kingdom the objectives approach was slow to gain a footing at the practical level, and they give their reasons:

"In part this might be attributed to the prevalence of a 'romantic' approach to education at the level of the primary school and to the obsession with content and the demands of public examinations that we earlier suggested has characterised education at the secondary level, but it may also indicate that practitioners of education have always recognised that education is more than a simple scientific process of this kind."⁷²

70 G. Thurburn, Voice and Speech (Nisbet, 1939), p. 5.

71 *ibid.*, p. 6.

72 M. Downey and A.V. Kelly, Theory and Practice of Education (Harper and Row, 1979), p. 200.

The suggestion here is that teachers in their practice reflected a certain wisdom which is corroborated by theory. Drama teachers can find comfort from the general dissatisfaction with the notion of specifying objectives in behavioural terms but are still faced with the problem that if they are to describe themselves as engaging in the rational activity of teaching, how precisely must objectives be specified? Does it make sense to talk of objectives at all or is it simply better to find some other way of describing teacher plans and intentions?

In curriculum theory alternatives have been suggested, some of which are usefully described by Downey and Kelly.⁷³ For example, an expressive objective in describing an educational encounter, "identifies a situation in which children are to work, a problem with which they are to cope, a task in which they are to engage but it does not specify what from that encounter, situation, problem or task they are to learn ..."⁷⁴ Certainly this model sounds more helpful than one which is conceived in terms of strict behavioural objectives but although teachers of drama sometimes approach a particular lesson with an account of theme and task only, it is clear from current literature that at other times they do so with a clearer view of the kind of learning or understanding they want to achieve. The authors also identify

73 M. Downey and A.V. Kelly, op. cit. (1979), pp. 200-209.

74 *ibid.*, p. 207, reference to E.W. Eisner, "Instructional and Expressive Educational Objectives: Their Formulation and Use in Curriculum", in W.J. Popham et al., Instructional Objectives, No. 3 (Chicago, 1969, Am. Ed. Research Ass. Mon. Series on Curriculum Evaluation).

approaches which reject the notion of the prespecification of objectives of any kind but stress the defining of value positions⁷⁵ or principles of procedure⁷⁶ which will inform classroom practice. The conclusion which they draw is to recommend the kind of flexibility teachers of drama would want to preserve. Objectives should not be seen as terminal goals nor should they preclude recognition and acceptance of unintended learning outcomes.

"Certainly, it would seem that the most productive approach to this question is one that eschews dogmatism, avoids the kind of tight preplanning that removes the freedom essential to any educational encounter, and allows for continued development and change in the light of experience. It is in this direction that the solution lies to the question of how we can plan our educational provision rationally, without planning it out of existence."⁷⁷

Drama teachers sometimes want to form objectives more precisely as a sequence of lessons develops. An approach to a class which leaves them to determine initially the content of the drama may mean that the teacher has no particular objective at the outset but formulates these as the lesson or sequence of lessons progresses.

Confusion often arises in the use of the term objectives when it is taken to refer both to teacher intention and to the

75 M. Downey and A.V. Kelly, op. cit. (1979), p. 207, reference to L. Stenhouse, An Introduction to Curriculum Research and Development (Heinemann, 1975).

76 *ibid.*, p. 207, reference to R. Pring, "Objectives and Innovation: The Irrelevance of Theory", London Educational Review, (1973).

77 *ibid.*, p. 208.

learning outcome. If they are kept as distinct notions it can be seen that the teacher's intention need not necessarily be taken as a statement of the learning outcome. The complexity of the concept intention also needs to be borne in mind. Anscombe has pointed out that,

"... a man may know that he is doing a thing under one description, and not under another ... He may know that he is sawing a plank, but not that he is sawing an oak plank or Smith's plank; but sawing an oak plank or Smith's plank is not something else that he is doing besides just sawing the plank that he is sawing."⁷⁸

In the same way, a teacher's intention may be to teach x and he may know that he is teaching x but 'teaching x' is not a definitive statement of what he is doing no more than 'x' is a definitive statement of what the pupils are learning. Objectives will not necessarily be seen as intended learning outcomes in a narrow sense which does not take into account the active participation of the learner in the whole process. The whole question of teacher intention and learning outcome in the context of drama will be discussed in the next chapter.

Although many practical books on the teaching of drama still move from a statement of aims (meaning usually the general value ascribed to drama) to a description of practical suggestions, there is an increasing tendency to write in terms of aims and objectives. The Inner London Drama Guidelines suggests that, "the

78 G.E.M. Anscombe, Intention (Basil Blackwell, 1979, first published 1957), p. 11.

long-term aim of drama teaching is to help the student to understand himself and the world he lives in"⁷⁹ and identifies a secondary aim, "for the students to achieve understanding of and satisfaction from the medium of drama".⁸⁰ These broad aims are accompanied by a list of more specific ends including among others the improvement of the social health of the group, the extension of the use of language, the stimulation to reading, observing and researching as a result of the drama. The section which describes lessons in practice begins each account with a narrow objective, e.g. "to examine the reasons for emigration".

Bolton gives an account of overall aims, "change in understanding, an expectation of change in understanding as a primary purpose, satisfaction from and understanding of the art form" compared with objectives: "autonomy, language development including expressive skills, social skills, theatre skills, reflection".⁸¹ He also lists prerequisites for drama which will also influence the teacher's actions and choice of strategies. He is concerned that the aims identify "fundamental priorities over the objectives".⁸²

In Learning Through Drama although, as was described earlier, the role of the teacher in the actual drama is sometimes limited, each of the lessons is described in terms of aims and more specific intentions of the teacher. In one example the aim "to encourage

79 C. O'Neill et al., op. cit. (1976), p. 7.

80 *ibid.*, p. 7.

81 G. Bolton, op. cit. (1979), p. 132.

82 *ibid.*, p. 132.

pupils' understanding of the problems presented ..." is accompanied by an account of the teacher's particular intention in the lesson which was "to set them a problem-solving situation which they could tackle in small groups but which had a common focus for the whole class".⁸³

In each of the examples given it will be noticed that the objectives vary in their degree of precision. It would be wrong therefore to prescribe a precise relationship between aims and objectives, seeing objectives as being derived from aims in a strict logical hierarchy. Writing about religious education, Holley tries to demonstrate how aims become increasingly refined through stages of generality to a precise specification of lessons aims which "indicate a precise, specific, limited learning content to be mastered in limited time".⁸⁴ It is doubtful whether a hierarchical scheme of this kind will work for drama.

The aim 'an increase in understanding of human situations' may be expressed more precisely in that it gives details of the area to be explored, e.g. 'to examine African customs'. On the other hand, there may be times when the objectives will give a more precise account of what is meant by 'understanding' by identifying the intended change in attitude: in a class of eight year old white Californians, "to realise that Africans rather

83 L. McGregor et al., op. cit. (1977), p. 98.

84 R. Holley, Religious Education and Religious Understanding (Routledge, 1978), p. 15.

than being primitive and quaint are like us in many ways".⁸⁵ Objectives like the latter are more likely to be formed in the course of a sequence of lessons in response to the needs of the group. However, the intended change in understanding will not necessarily always be identified as clearly.

A similar point about the complexity of the relationship between aims and objectives is made by Sockett in the context of a discussion of general curriculum planning. He points out that a request to be more specific in any context may be answered either by the giving of an example or the giving of detail,

"... so when aims are specified as objectives, the objectives may either be examples or details of the aims, in these two broad senses indicated. Suppose that a general aim in a school is to teach children to be honest, you may be asked to specify. You could do this by giving examples, e.g. pays the right amount of dinner money, tells the teacher if he doesn't know the answer to a question; or you may give an account of what is entailed in being honest which may well require exemplification."⁸⁶

Sockett goes on to point out that the formation of objectives in relation to aims may give rise to important epistemological questions. The point of Sockett's discussion is that the general label 'specifying aims into objectives' may involve markedly different processes and this is not always taken into account in curriculum planning.

85 G. Bolton, op. cit. (1979), p. 41.

86 H. Sockett, Designing the Curriculum (Open Books, 1976), p. 46.

This discussion has considered the importance of both aims and objectives in the teaching of drama: without overriding aims, there may be a tendency to elevate method to the status of principle; without objectives, choice of method is likely to be fairly arbitrary because the teacher can draw comfort from his belief that drama is in general just valuable. Perhaps the term 'method' has the wrong overtones, tending to imply a means/end approach where the choice of means is arbitrary. Although the relationship between the teaching strategy or method and the aims of the teacher is likely to be contingent, the relationship between teaching strategy and objectives, as suggested earlier in the discussion of objectives, is likely to be more complex.

It might be thought that a study of the justification of drama could be seen primarily as an examination of aims. However, it has emerged that the teacher's aims and objectives have a central role in the learning process but by no means limit and categorically determine the potential for learning. In this discussion of aims detailed consideration was given to 'growth' drama but not to 'drama for understanding'; in the context of the latter, questions were raised about how precisely objectives should be specified which relate to epistemological questions to do with what is meant by learning and understanding. These questions will be dealt with in the next chapter.

CHAPTER FOUR

LEARNING

(i) Introduction

In this chapter some of the central questions associated with the concept learning are discussed. What can the pupils be said to be learning in drama? How far is the concept learning sufficient for distinguishing a particular approach to drama? How does learning relate to understanding? In dealing with these and other questions the discussion will centre on the concepts teaching, learning and understanding without reference to feeling. If that point is made clear from the start it will save constant repetition that the analysis presented here must be considered incomplete as only one side of the question and will explain the apparent emphasis on the cognitive in this paper. A framework will be established which will relate to future discussion of meaning and feeling to give a more composite picture of the various justifications for drama. Thus, although the important question as to whether the conception of drama as art conflicts with the conception of drama as a learning process has been constantly borne in mind, it will not be dealt with specifically in this chapter but will be a central part of the analysis of feeling.

It has been the intention in this discussion to set the justification for drama against a wider background of educational debate, particularly to consider drama in relation to different concepts of education and mental development.

Section one looks at intention as an important factor in distinguishing the concept of teaching and considers the importance of relating teaching to learning. Section two again looks at intention but this time in relation to learning and considers the view that intention is a necessary condition of learning as well as contrasting views which reject this analysis. Section three considers another criterion for learning, that the learner has achieved a particular end state whose object is a particular skill or belief. The result of the discussion will be to suggest that on the view of learning so far considered much of what is thought to count as learning in drama would have to be disqualified. In Section four, therefore, an alternative conception of learning will be considered which will be related to the idea of unintentional learning dealt with in Section two. Although reference will be made to drama throughout the discussion, Section five identifies more specifically the implications of the analysis in relation to various drama exponents, particularly in terms of analysing justifications for the subject.

(ii) Teaching

In the last chapter it was suggested that a significant change of emphasis in educational drama has been an increasing stress on the role of the teacher. In this respect drama can be seen to be in step with a wider reaction in education against what many would consider the worst excesses of child-centred approaches which relegated the teacher to a passive role in the classroom. Although

what is meant by 'teaching' will very much depend on what is meant by 'learning' as will be demonstrated, it is perhaps fair to represent the new emphasis by saying that more recent approaches to drama in education have made teaching central to the process.

"When I was a young teacher colleagues might out of interest have asked me occasionally what I was doing with a particular class of children in drama, but nobody as far as I can remember actually asked me what I was teaching them; and I would have felt some personal insult if the question had been rephrased to 'what actually are they learning?' Apparently learning and teaching were all right for other subjects, but in drama one just thought and talked about what one was doing."¹

To make sense of the claim that it is now appropriate to speak of teaching drama as opposed to just doing it, an important distinction needs to be made. Analyses of teaching commonly evoke Ryle's task/achievement analysis of various verbs. In The Concept of Mind he distinguishes between those words which signal success or achievement, e.g. win, find, cure, as opposed to task words, e.g. hunting, treating.² Many verbs like 'teaching' function in both a task/achievement sense so that it is possible to describe someone as teaching, meaning that they are attempting to fulfil certain objectives, without necessarily implying that they are succeeding in doing so. Thus to say of someone that he is not teaching a class anything may mean (more commonly) (a) he is not succeeding in what he has set out to do or (b) one does not want

1 G. Bolton, Towards a Theory of Drama in Education (Longman, 1979), p. 30.

2 G. Ryle, The Concept of Mind (Hutchinson, 1949), p. 143.

to recognise what he is doing as teaching. This distinction is important because when the claim is made that teaching is now central to more recent approaches to drama it is making a claim about the nature of the enterprise rather than about its success.

It is therefore important to consider how it is possible to distinguish teaching from other activities. This is not to say that one particular type of activity is being recommended by educationists to the exclusion of others. Teaching is a polymorphous concept and like other terms can refer to a wide variety of activities:

"If we were to consider 'farming' as an activity, we might note that ploughing was one farming job and tree-spraying another, while applying fertiliser is a third job and milking is a fourth, yet there is no one common nuclear operation by virtue of doing which alone a man is to be called a farmer. Similarly with soliciting, drafting wills is one job and arranging for the transfer of property another, while defending a client in court is a third and explaining some point of law is a fourth, but again there is no one common nuclear operation present in all. So with teaching..."³

Earlier it was suggested that developments in drama can be compared with wider trends in education away from excesses of child-centred education to reinstate teaching as an important element. This does not mean, however, that one method is now being recommended over others.

At this point the discussion is in danger of falling into difficulties. On the one hand, it was suggested that teaching

3 R.F. Dearden, "Instruction and Learning by Discovery", in R.S. Peters (ed.), The Concept of Education (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967), p. 136.

needs to be distinguished as an activity, on the other hand it is now being suggested that it is in the nature of the concept teaching to refer to a wide variety of activities (including presumably many of the discovery methods embraced by child-centred theorists). The problem is partly resolved by evoking intention as an important distinguishing characteristic.

It is clear that intention is a necessary distinguishing factor in some though not all activities. There is the classic joke situation where a man raises his hand in an auction and inadvertently buys an expensive item; his only way of saving his money is to convince the authorities that he was only blowing his nose and did not intend to make a bid. Yet it is quite easy to say whether someone is swimming or not irrespective of what is going through his mind simply by observing his external, physical action: that he is somehow propelling himself through the water is sufficient condition for an observer to describe him as swimming. If on the other hand the same swimmer is now to be described as instructing or teaching swimming it would not need a particular change in his activity (he could be demonstrating a particular stroke) but rather a change in intention. Moreover that intention must make the connection between teaching and learning. If we were to observe someone swimming on his own and he claimed later that he was teaching swimming, it would seem very odd. To say that someone is teaching is to say that the person has a particular intention to bring about learning; the concept learning is necessary for an explanation of teaching.

The stress on intention is common to a number of analyses of the concept teaching. Thus Hirst claims,

"It is by clarifying the aim, the intention of what is going on, that we can see when standing on one's head to demonstrate something, or any other activity, is in fact teaching and not, say, simply entertaining."⁴

Dearden considers what is characteristic of teaching as an activity:

"This question is not to be answered by a review, even a very extensive review, of the particular things which a teacher might do, but by considering the central intention which lies behind his efforts."⁵

Fleming, in his analysis, accepts the common view that, "teaching must be characterised in terms of its intention, that of bringing about learning".⁶

Many of the analyses of 'teaching' can be subjected to the general criticisms which have been levelled at some analytic approaches to philosophy of education which were identified in Chapter One. Such analyses often attempt to establish necessary and sufficient conditions of the concept of teaching without recognising that there are different uses of 'teaching' depending on particular purposes.⁷

4 P. Hirst, "What is Teaching?", in R.S. Peters (ed.), The Philosophy of Education (O.U.P., 1973), p. 167.

5 R.F. Dearden, "Instruction and Learning by Discovery", in R.S. Peters (ed.), *op. cit.* (1967), p. 136.

6 K.G. Fleming, "Criteria of Learning and Teaching", Journal of Philosophy of Education (Vol. 14, No. 1, 1980), p. 40.

7 The experimenter in one sense of the term can be said to teach the rat the way out of the maze.

Another problem with analyses which identify intention as a central distinguishing factor in teaching is that the complexity of the concept of intention is not always acknowledged. If teaching is defined in terms of "the intention to bring about learning" what are we to understand by the phrase? Does it mean that the teacher intends specific learning outcomes to the extent that for each teaching activity (writing on the board, asking a question) he has a particular learning objective in mind? This interpretation would seem to oversimplify what is involved in the process of teaching particularly when individual subjects are considered. For example, the teaching of literature is likely to be a much more subtle and open-ended process than this analysis suggests. On the other hand, if it is just a matter of having a general intention to bring about learning, to what does 'intention' here refer?⁸ There is the further problem identified in the last chapter that someone may know that he is teaching x but x may be described in a number of different ways. It would be wrong to deny that pupils learn much from teachers by way of values, habits, attitudes which can in a sense be said to be unintentionally taught, a fact which adds a further complication to the analysis.

Despite these complexities which sound a warning note against an oversimplified account of the relationship between teaching and intention, I would agree that teaching must characteristically have a central intentional component, using intention here in its

8 See G.E.M. Anscombe, Intention (Basil Blackwell, 1957).

more common sense of 'deliberate purpose'. The implication here is that the teacher's decisions and activities must be motivated by some general aim, although his thinking need not be restricted to intended learning outcomes. This account of teaching and the relationship between teaching and intention cannot be considered complete but these further considerations will be given attention in section four on learning and understanding and in the chapter on Meaning. At present attention will be concentrated on the relationship between teaching and learning.

For the use of the term 'teach' most contexts demand two objects for the verb: the teacher has taught x to y. This 'two accusatives rule' for teaching, although it sacrifices subtleties for clarity, usefully identifies broad approaches to education in terms of the concept. It has been suggested that the slogan of some progressives 'we teach children not subjects' concentrates attention on only one of the accusatives, whereas the traditionalists concentrated too much attention on what they were teaching. Perhaps early exponents of drama would have argued that they were teaching pupils without being particularly concerned with the content of what they were teaching. They tended to be more concerned with developing personal qualities.

It is clear why most discussions of teaching include an analysis of learning because the two are so closely related. In answer to the question what sort of intention distinguishes teaching from other concepts Hirst also makes the connection with learning, claiming, "... the concept teaching is in fact totally

unintelligible without a grasp of the concept of learning".⁹ He is thereby prompted to look at learning and it will be useful to consider what he has to say.

Just as teaching refers to a wide variety of activities, so does learning. Hirst suggests that the same distinguishing criteria of intention can be applied:

"But if there are many different activities of learning, what makes them cases of learning? I suggest the answer is again found, as in the case of teaching, by looking at the intention of the activities concerned."¹⁰

He goes on to suggest that the intention of learning is always some specific achievement or end state. Because what Hirst says here is so important to this discussion it will be worth repeating the points he makes in the following quotation,

"A teaching activity is the activity of a person, A (the teacher), the intention of which is to bring about an activity (learning), by a person, B (the pupil), the intention of which is to achieve some end state (e.g. knowing, appreciating) whose object is X (e.g. a belief, attitude, skill)."¹¹

How then does this analysis relate to drama? It was suggested that the relationship between teaching and intention is a more complex matter than Hirst's comment acknowledges but it was also accepted that it was fair to recommend that a broad notion of 'deliberate purpose' should be central to teaching. Now although

9 P. Hirst, "What is Teaching?", in R.S. Peters (ed.), *op. cit.*, (1973), p. 168.

10 *ibid.*, p. 170.

11 *ibid.*, p. 171.

the account of teaching so far given provides a useful framework which may distinguish and evaluate different approaches to the subject, when the analysis turns to learning (as it necessarily must) it will be argued that on the basis of this view much of what is currently thought of as learning in drama must be disqualified. Hirst's view specifies intention and objects of learning as important criteria and these will be considered in detail. The relevant questions for drama can be expressed simply. If drama exponents are offering learning as a justification for the subject, must the teacher have a clear view of what he intends them to learn? Must they be aware that they are learning? What is it that the pupils are said to be learning?

(iii) Learning and Intention

Before considering why it is that intention is often considered a criterion for learning and before evaluating that criterion it is worth making the point that intention here is taken to refer to the conscious awareness of the learner in the learning process. Intention in this context therefore is connected with the notion of avowal: someone who intended that x would be able to affirm that he intended x. It is different in this respect from the concept motives which can refer to someone's unconscious motivation to do something. Intentions are deliberate, motives may or may not be so. When speaking about intentional learning therefore it is not simply a question that the learning was preplanned as opposed to learning which takes place when a lesson changes

direction mid-course. Neither is the notion of intentional learning simply equivalent to that which is desirable: if someone had learned to be over-confident on a particular course the instructor might say this was unintended. To speak of intentional learning is simply to state that the learner has the intention to learn, his consciousness is directed towards learning.

Study of learning is obviously an important aspect of psychology but there are questions about learning which are not empirical and which are more properly claimed to be the province of philosophy. Hamlyn, in his article "Logical and Psychological Aspects of Learning", makes the following distinction to which most discussions of learning in philosophy would subscribe:

"Psychology has much to tell us about learning - about, for example, particular cases and individual differences. It can also tell us about the effect on learning of all those factors in people which we can call psychological - personality traits, intelligence, and so on. What I have been urging is, amongst other things, that there is also required proper reflection on what learning and education are, and what they involve in consequence."¹²

The attempt to say what learning is can be seen to be in part a linguistic question and the contribution of philosophical discussion has been largely to attempt to demarcate the concept, to establish defining characteristics for its use. Some of these attempts will be considered, leading to an observation about both the value and limitation of this approach. Hamlyn's own work, it

12 D.W. Hamlyn, "The Logical and Psychological Aspects of Learning", in R.S. Peters (ed.), op. cit. (1967), p. 43.

should be said, has wider concerns than this in that he has examined accounts of the nature and growth of knowledge and understanding provided by the contrasting philosophical traditions of rationalism and empiricism. Some of Hamlyn's observations, particularly on the nature of understanding will be relevant later in this study but for the present attention will be confined to attempts to analyse the concept learning. The aim of the following discussion will be to show generally how intention emerges as a criterion rather than to give a detailed survey of different analyses of the concept.

Magee, in his discussion of learning, points out the inadequacies of behaviourist definitions like "learning is the relatively permanent modification of behaviour as the result of experience".¹³ He does so on the grounds that a student might be said to have learned a geometry proof but not show any change in behaviour at all, while another student might be able to duplicate a proof because of his sound memory, thereby manifesting a change in behaviour, but could not be said to have learned the proof because he does not understand it. Whereas a stipulative definition of the kind given may be useful for the purposes of some empirical research, for the educationist a more complete representation of what is meant by learning is needed.

Vesey has discussed the conceptual differences between conditioning and learning. He questions the description that

13 J.B. Magee, Philosophical Analysis in Education (Harper and Row, N.Y., 1971), p. 71.

learning has taken place simply if, "someone has acquired, otherwise than simply by maturation, an ability to respond to a situation in a new way".¹⁴ He suggests this is insufficient criterion for saying that learning has taken place because learning involves not only acquiring the ability in question, but also that the learner has done something to acquire it. This is not to argue, of course, that the two concepts are not frequently used in the same way or that conditioning is not often seen as a form of learning. The point is that there is a distinction between the concepts which can be identified in usage which is of particular importance to educationists.

When the term conditioning is used to refer to change that is brought about in someone's behaviour it usually implies that there is a lack of conscious awareness on the part of the individual involved. This is the point Vesey makes when he discusses the example of the man who slowly acquires the ability in a laboratory to contract his own eye muscles. Even in this example, which appears to be a case of learning to do something at will, on close examination it is seen to be a process of associating stimuli and responses. If somebody says that he was conditioned in childhood to behave in a certain way it usually implies that the particular responses in question are automatic, lacking at the time understanding or conscious awareness.

14 G. Vesey, "Conditioning and Learning", in R.S. Peters (ed.), *op. cit.* (1967), p. 61.

Attempts to make the concept clearer have also been made by contrasting learning with concepts like development, growth or maturity. For the purposes of drama it might be thought that such an analysis might be illuminating for as has previously been described there has been a significant move from talk of development to talk of learning through drama. What process then would be called growth, development or maturity but would not normally be described as learning? The most obvious use of the term growth is in the case of physical growth of the human body. A child can grow to sufficient height to reach a biscuit tin on a shelf but the term learning would only be applied if, for example, he found that by standing on a chair he could reach the shelf. People grow, mature or develop physically but these terms are also applied to the characteristics of personality. It is common to speak of individuals developing more patience or tolerance or growing in sensitivity; to speak of learning such personal qualities tends to imply more effort or difficulty was involved on the part of the learner.

By contrasting learning with related concepts it is clear to see how intention emerges as a criterion of learning. It is this aspect of the concept which now needs more careful consideration.

In an article entitled "Criteria of Learning and Teaching", Fleming has contributed to the debate which attempts to demarcate these two concepts more precisely. He makes it clear in his discussion that he is primarily concerned with intentional learning, although he wishes to acknowledge the fact that learning,

"is sometimes done without the intention of doing so".¹⁵ The reason for this concern is not to disparage unintentional learning but because its characterisation must depend upon that of intentional learning. When he offers conditions for the application of the concept he includes readiness on the part of the learner, motivation and mastery. For the purposes of this discussion the motivation criterion is the one which is particularly interesting. He explains the reason for its inclusion:

"Negatively, it is the function of the motivational condition to rule out altogether from the range of application of the concept of learning any changes which come about solely through maturation. Positively, its function is to differentiate the process of cognitive development from the processes which lead to physical maturity; for there is characteristically an element of voluntariness in the learner's engaging in the processes which may be intermediate between his not having mastered the X and his having mastered it, whereas there is no such element in his maturation."¹⁶

Although, as pointed out earlier, motive and intention are not identical concepts, by including motivation as a criterion of learning Fleming builds in the notion of intention, for the motivational condition has within its range "the many factors in B's experience any of which in a given case could bring him to try to master what he is ready to master".¹⁷ These factors he suggests include intending to master X because he is interested,

15 K.G. Fleming, "Criteria of Learning and Teaching", Journal of Philosophy of Education (Vol. 14, No. 1, 1980), p. 40.

16 *ibid.*, p. 43.

17 *ibid.*, p. 43.

intending to resolve cognitive conflicts, intending to remove apprehended discrepancies and so on. What Fleming's analysis of intentional learning in part reveals is that, as might be expected, intention is involved in the criteria. This may seem to suggest that his comments are trivial which is not the case: as suggested, there are other aspects to the concept identified which are less relevant to this discussion. The point is rather to question his claim that the characterisation of unintentional learning must depend on that of intentional learning, to question moreover whether the simple distinction between intentional and unintentional learning is an adequate representation of the nature of learning.

Before considering that question, it is worth making the point that an exploration of learning on a basis of linguistic usage alone although valuable in that it may bring clarity to the use of concepts may also have limitations and force unnecessarily narrow conceptions of the nature of learning. By distinguishing learning from maturation on the basis of intention, school learning is in danger of being narrowly restricted in unhelpful ways. How we use 'learning' will largely depend on the context and our particular purpose. It may be argued that it is relatively easy to provide evidence of uses of learning which show that unintentional learning is a meaningful notion, that it makes sense to speak of young children learning language, although they do not have the intention to do so. On the other hand, we may want to distinguish first from second language acquisition by

saying one was learned, the other just picked up. Often, what purports to be simple descriptive analysis of the way concepts are used is in fact disguised prescription because in our descriptions we usually have a particular range of purposes for which words are used in mind. Problems arise from seeking greater clarity in concepts by appeal to usage than our actual use of language allows. Analyses in philosophy of education which proceed on this basis of establishing necessary and sufficient conditions for the use of concepts like learning seem to demand a rigidity about our use of language that the later Wittgenstein challenged. In the name of the philosophical 'revolution' inspired by Wittgenstein such procedures seem more like a betrayal of his view of the nature of language. That does not mean to say, of course, that attempts to reveal the implicit rules which govern our use of terms cannot be given some explication. Even if an analysis of learning were to admit a distinction between intentional and unintentional learning such an analysis would have little to say about whether unintentional learning is important or relevant to a process of formal, public education.

It is at this point that the discussion may be usefully related to drama. A large part of the learning of young children is likely to take place during play, when the children are engrossed in what they see as enjoyable fun. It would not be helpful to engage in a discussion here on the complex relationship between play and drama as it is seen by different exponents

but suffice it to say that there is common agreement that children in drama will more likely see themselves as playing rather than learning. In discussing stages of learning in dramatic activity Bolton makes the point, "This notion of learning is very much a teacher's, not his pupils' view of dramatic activity".¹⁸ In both Learning Through Drama¹⁹ and Drama Guidelines²⁰ the question is not considered directly but it is clear from descriptions of lessons that this is so.

For this reason the type of discussion of learning undertaken by Dunlop which challenges the intentional criterion, and the general insights into the nature of learning which can be drawn from the work of Polanyi are of particular importance to teachers of drama.²¹ It goes without saying that what these writers have to offer is likely to be important to all teachers but the application to drama is perhaps more urgent because the teaching of the subject is to a large degree undertaken with an implicit conception of unintentional learning. There may, of course, be times when the pupils will have a different conception of the process in which they are involved but more likely they will see themselves as playing, doing drama or performing.

Dunlop, in his discussion of learning, draws attention to phenomenological considerations which support his argument for the

18 G. Bolton, op. cit. (1979), p. 51.

19 L. McGregor et al., Learning Through Drama (Heinemann, 1977).

20 C. O'Neill et al., Drama Guidelines (Heinemann, 1976).

21 M. Polanyi, Personal Knowledge (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958).

importance of taking into account the unintentional aspect of learning. Examination of the experience of learning provides a challenge to some of the analyses of learning with which he quarrels. He wants to make a distinction between deliberate attempts to learn and learning itself, a distinction which is crucial. He considers some familiar experiences of learning such as the deliberate memorising of a poem or learning of a piece of music and suggests that the activities associated with such undertakings are fully intentional actions originating in and authorised by the focal self but he goes on to say,

"At some point the intentional activity of the focal self has to give place to something else. No learning will take place unless the material is accepted or taken in by lower layers of the psyche. This can be clearly seen when we recall that we frequently break off our rehearsals with the material only very imperfectly mastered, yet, on returning to it after an interval, we find that we can reproduce a great deal more than we had expected. Something has clearly been going on in the interim period."²²

What Dunlop is arguing is not so much in favour of the notion of unintentional learning, but rather against the suggestion that learning is entirely something one does, an action in the fully intentional sense. He attributes this mistaken view to a Cartesian conception of man which encourages a misleading polarity between action and passion. (By passion here he means the state of being acted upon as opposed to being active). Some events involving persons are not intelligible purely in terms of

22 F. Dunlop, "Human Nature, Learning and Ideology", British Journal of Educational Studies (Vol. XXV, No. 3, October 1977), p. 246.

action or passion but in terms that involve a mixture of both.

"We should wean ourselves away from thinking of a human being as made up of two sharply distinct things - a body and a mind; it is nearer the truth to say that he is best understood in terms of a series of 'layers' or 'levels' of being not sharply marked off from each other, from the purely vegetable life which is all that remains in the comatose victim of a road accident, to the level of fully conscious and intentional response to moral and other spiritual values."²³

He argues that learning has both an active and passive aspect to it: "the passive side of learning is itself highly important since a great deal of what is ever learnt is unspecified, and hence has to be picked up or acquired at a less than fully conscious level".²⁴ It is important to distinguish between deliberate attempts to learn and learning itself because although the former can be made subject to the will, the latter cannot. Not all learning is necessarily preceded by attempts to learn. On this basis Dunlop would describe learning not so much as an activity but as a process, because the latter concept retains the passive element.

It is perhaps easier to grasp what Dunlop is saying if the notion of understanding is introduced. The relationship between these concepts will be explored more fully later but reference to understanding will help here. Imagine the difference between the rote learning of facts and the understanding of an obscure

23 F. Dunlop, op. cit., p. 240.

24 *ibid.*, p. 245.

poem as occupying two ends of a learning continuum. The deliberate act of memorising appears to be under our fully conscious control (although Dunlop would argue that it is not) but it is much clearer to see that although it is possible to set about understanding the poem, the process of coming to an understanding of it must include things like a response to associations, allusions, imagery, which can only be articulated after some understanding of these has taken place.

In his discussion of learning and teaching Oakeshott also places a central importance on that aspect of learning of which the learner is never fully consciously aware.²⁵ He suggests that a process of learning facts or information must be accompanied by what he calls judgement. Information alone never constitutes the whole of what we know. To it must be added knowledge which allows us to interpret it, to decide on its relevance, etc. 'Knowing how' must be added to the 'knowing what' of information. He explains judgement as follows:

"By 'judgement' I mean the tacit or implicit component of knowledge, the ingredient which is not merely unspecified in propositions but is unspecified in propositions. It is the component of knowledge which does not appear in the form of rules and which, therefore, cannot be resolved into information or itemized in the manner characteristic of information."²⁶

25 M. Oakeshott, "Learning and Teaching", in R.S. Peters (ed.), *op. cit.* (1967).

26 *ibid.*, p. 167.

The work of Polanyi can also be enlisted to support this general conception of learning. He argues that there is a tacit component in all knowledge. He does not direct his attention primarily to educational concepts but his general philosophical position has relevance here. In a detailed argument couched in terms of traditional scientific discoveries and concepts, he questions the notion of objectivism which attempts to deny the personal participation of the knower in all acts of understanding, a view which is implicit in many approaches.²⁷ He argues that there is a tacit or implicit dimension to all knowing which cannot be specified or articulated. He identifies examples of tacit knowing where the subject is not explicitly aware of what he knows.²⁸

This stress on a tacit dimension of knowing means that learning can never be entirely explicit. The ability to integrate and apply knowledge is largely a tacit process:

"... owing to the ultimately tacit character of all our knowledge, we remain ever unable to say all that we know, so also, in view of the tacit character of meaning, we can never quite know what is implied in what we say."²⁹

The strength of these various views can be vindicated by considering the case of language learning and the acquisition of concepts. There has been a considerable number of publications which have stressed the important relevance for education of the

27 See in particular Part One of Personal Knowledge, op. cit. (1958).

28 *ibid.*, Part Three.

29 *ibid.*, p. 95.

realisation of the relationship between language and learning, that learning a subject is a process of acquiring concepts.³⁰ Consequently there have been recommendations about the importance of exploratory talk to allow the expression and development of concepts and various warnings about the limitations of a reliance on a transmission model of teaching. Implicit in these views is an awareness that language and concepts are not acquired in a fully intentional manner.

The discussion then points to the fact that a simple representation of learning as being a purely intentional activity may be misleading. It is easy to see why this view should emerge because characteristically learning in schools, particularly secondary schools, takes place because pupils deliberately set about learning tasks in various subjects. Now it is one thing to claim that there is a tacit component in learning which must be acknowledged but it is another matter to suggest that it is the tacit component which is of central importance, which would seem to be the case in much drama work which does not make the learning explicit. When learning is applied to drama, in many cases it refers to what may be described as a more natural process of learning and here may lie one of the subjects strengths in that it is harnessing a natural propensity to learn. But there remains the problem: that in an educational context the learning must in some sense be subject to public scrutiny. One answer, of

30 D. Barnes, From Communication to Curriculum (Penguin, 1976) and J. Britton, Language and Learning (Penguin, 1970).

course, would be to suggest that the teacher has a clear view of the intended learning but it will be argued that this again would exclude much of what claims to be learning in drama. To explore this question more fully it will be necessary to consider Hirst's second criterion for learning which was the specification of a particular end state.

(iv) Objects of Learning

Attention must now turn in this discussion to 'objects of learning' and in the context of drama to the question, 'what is it that the pupils are said to be learning?' It was suggested that the answer to this question would influence the attitude which might be taken to the notion of unintentional learning. This is so because even if one accepts that there is a tacit, ineffable element in all learning and knowledge, it would be strange to teach the use of a lathe in metal work (or a geometrical problem or many other components of the curriculum) on the basis that the pupils did not have the intention to learn the particular skill in question. In Dunlop's terms even if the actual learning has an unintentional aspect, it makes sense in this case that the pupils must set about learning before they actually learn; it would be wrong to deny that there is a tacit component in the acquisition of skills, (Polanyi has demonstrated this fact at some length), it is just to say that the nature of what is to be learned is likely to determine the nature of the learning and common sense dictates that in many cases the learning

takes place because the pupils set about the particular learning in question. In contrast to learning to use a lathe however, in drama the pupils may be learning to improvise or may be learning about dramatic structure without consciously seeing themselves as doing so, a point to which this discussion will return.

As well as being important to the nature of the learning process, what is learned will also be vital to the teacher. Although intention may be rejected as a necessary criterion for learning it was rightly taken as an important component in teaching: education cannot proceed with a combination of unintentional teaching and unintentional learning which would allow so much to chance, although it may be said in passing that many approaches to drama have proceeded on this basis.

This section then will be concerned with the central question, 'what is it that pupils are said to be learning in drama?', but that discussion will also extend into the next section on learning and understanding for it will be argued that to think in terms of objects of learning may in itself be misleading. But before that assertion can be made, attention must be given to candidates which present themselves as possible objects of learning in drama.

To claim that the purpose of drama is for learning is in itself to say little that is very informative. Part of the reason is the multifarious way in which the term learning is used. It is possible to speak of learning the twelve times table, learning to walk, learning how to ride a bicycle, learning to be

punctual, learning to read poetry, learning that Paris is in France or (mistakenly) that Paris is in Spain. In the context of its use in drama there is a significant difference from other subjects in that although it is common to speak of learning French, History, Physics or whatever, it is normally a question of learning through drama.

Is learning in drama concerned with the acquisition of knowledge? The question in that form is rather too wide and needs to be narrowed. This is not just because the notion of knowledge is itself wide which must, for example, include at the least both propositional knowledge, knowledge that ... as well as procedural, knowledge how ... but the answer may depend on how knowledge is seen to relate, however vaguely, to the notion of learning. This will become clearer if consideration is given to two answers given by philosophers to the question whether learning itself should be conceived as the acquisition of knowledge. Scheffler, for example, argues that educational notions like learning and teaching extend outside the mere acquisition of knowledge to include also, "habits, traits, propensities of one or another sort, and attainments".³¹ In contrast, Hamlyn bases his article "Human Learning" on the view that learning is the acquisition of knowledge thereby excluding the formation of habits by what would more accurately be described as conditioning in order to answer objections that his conception of learning is too narrow. He continues,

31 I. Scheffler, Conditions of Knowledge (Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1965), p. 106.

"An objection of a different kind to my association of learning with knowledge would be that there are forms of learning in which the end of the learning is not in fact knowledge. We can, after all, learn to see things in new ways, to accept things, to appreciate things, and so on. Does this learning involve new knowledge?"³²

Hamlyn's answer to the question is that knowledge enters into the picture somehow in indirect ways.

"If I have learned to love someone, rather than merely come to love them, my love follows upon and exists in virtue of what I have come to know."³³

Although Hamlyn does not take the discussion at this point any further, his answer is interesting in that it would seem to point to the inclusion of a tacit dimension, the knowledge in question would not be fully conscious.

In the context of drama, the teacher may for a series of lessons have the fairly simple objective that the pupils learn to co-operate with each other. It could be argued, in the way Hamlyn does, that the pupils are in a sense acquiring knowledge but this does not help make distinctions which would be useful for the discussion in hand.

What might be more useful would be to relate the question of what pupils might be said to be learning in drama to Hirst's fairly clearly defined approach to curriculum justification. The question now becomes more narrowly defined: is learning in drama

32 D.W. Hamlyn, "Human Learning", in R.S. Peters (ed.), op. cit. (1973), p. 180.

33 *ibid.*, p. 180.

concerned with forms of knowledge as, for example, identified by Hirst? It is clear that his approach has had a significant influence on curriculum theory so that the question is quite an important one.

In his now well known "Liberal Education and the Nature of Knowledge", Hirst defines the forms of knowledge as "not collections of information, but the complex ways of understanding experience which man has achieved, which are publicly specifiable and which are gained through learning".³⁴ The distinguishing features for the forms of knowledge are identified as (1) they involve central concepts peculiar to the particular form, (2) each has a distinct logical structure, (3) each form has distinctive expressions that are testable against experience in accordance with particular criteria, (4) the forms have developed particular techniques and skills for exploring experience and testing their distinctive expressions. It should be said that Hirst's argument has been widely criticised, revised and criticised again and has thereby subject to much detailed scrutiny although, as Smith has pointed out, the theory continues to be influential.³⁵ Smith's own criticism of Hirst's theory points out serious confusion in Hirst's treatment of knowledge, truth, meaning and objectivity. I do not propose to summarise these trenchant criticisms which

34 P. Hirst, "Liberal Education and the Nature of Knowledge", in P. Hirst, Knowledge and the Curriculum (Routledge, 1974), p. 38.

35 R.D. Smith, "Hirst's Unruly Theory: Forms of Knowledge, Truth and Meaning", Educational Studies (Vol. 7, No. 1, 1981).

have been advanced against his theory. Suffice it to say that in seeking for a justification for drama on the curriculum this is not provided by the forms of knowledge view.

That this is the case can be seen by considering the four criteria identified by Hirst (for it is difficult to see how they can relate to drama) but it can be seen even more clearly by considering Hirst's article, "Literature and the Fine Arts as a Unique Form of Knowledge".³⁶ Of the seven distinct forms of knowledge originally identified by Hirst presumably drama would have to come into the category of literature and the fine arts but it is clear that Hirst is concerned with art as an object of knowledge not with aesthetic experience as a form of knowing,

"I am not concerned with the experience of coming to know, or of knowing as a form of seeing, thinking, or being acquainted with ... It is rather the sense in which there is a content communicated in artistic expressions, and the legitimacy of talking here about knowledge of a propositional or statement kind that I wish to pursue."³⁷

Thus if drama were concerned primarily with the study of texts, with publicly accessible art forms there might be some grounds for looking to Hirst's theory for support for justification, although it would be difficult to come to terms with his view that art can be construed in terms of propositional knowledge. At the moment, however, drama is widely conceived as experience rather than just the appreciation of art forms. Certainly the

36 P. Hirst, "Literature and the Fine Arts as a Unique Form of Knowledge", in P. Hirst, op. cit. (1974).

37 *ibid.*, pp. 153-4.

reading and understanding of texts might be considered to be part of drama's concern just as drama might be used to teach other subjects, but clearly these are only two aspects of the way drama is used in schools.

Hirst's theory has provoked both reverence and strong opposition. While I have not thought it valuable to discuss his argument in detail, it is useful to consider in general terms the growth of his and similar ideas. They can be seen as an attempt to reinstate the public element in education as opposed to the emphasis on experience given by progressives. The publication Perspectives on Plowden edited by Peters puts many of these ideas into a clear context because it is so directly and trenchantly critical of the excesses of the progressive theorists. It quotes in a frontispiece the following,

"The school of experience is not school at all, not because no one learns in it but because no one teaches. Teaching is the expedition of learning; a person who is taught learns more quickly than one who is not."³⁸

Similarly The Logic of Education was concerned to emphasise the public modes of experience and thereby provide "a much needed reconciliation between the subject-centred and child-centred approaches to education".³⁹

The publications mentioned along with many others⁴⁰ were concerned to preserve the insights gained from the progressives while

38 R.S. Peters (ed.), Perspectives on Plowden (Routledge, 1969). The quotation is by B.F. Skinner.

39 P. Hirst and R.S. Peters, The Logic of Education (Routledge, 1970), p. ix.

40 In particular, R.S. Peters, Ethics and Education (Allen and Unwin, 1966).

restoring more of a balance,

"It was understandable about forty years ago that reformers should proclaim that 'education is growth' or that children should be encouraged to learn from experience; for there was a great deal wrong, both morally and psychologically, with the old elementary school tradition ... If, however, an educational theory is developed decades later out of such a corrective emphasis without due account being taken of other aspects of the educational situation, a very one-sided and misleading set of beliefs can emerge. My contention is that this has happened with the Plowden report."⁴¹

The parallels with drama are interesting. Deverall has rightly pointed out that Way's book, published in the same year as the report, "presents a particular application of some of the general principles underlying the Plowden Report. Both were representative of a trend or movement in education whose fortunes were high at that time".⁴² The dissatisfaction with progressive approaches is reflected in writers on drama who began to question what were seen as rather aimless practices in drama in the name of self-expression. Allen, when discussing what he calls the "Primary School Revolution" in favourable terms still has this comment:

"Insofar as teachers of art and drama have recently tended to identify themselves with progressive rather than formal methods in the classroom, they must accept some of the prevailing criticism. The chaos that I have often seen in a drama class exasperates me quite

41 R.S. Peters (ed.), op. cit. (1969).

42 J. Deverall, Preview of G. Bolton's Towards a Theory of Drama in Education in London Drama (Vol. 6, No. 1, Autumn 1979), p. 4.

as much as the boredom that so often prevails in the formal classroom."⁴³

Chaos in classroom practice can be avoided by imposing structures of one kind or another but do not necessarily guarantee that anything worthwhile is going on. If the forms of knowledge theory does not provide a sufficient justification, how do teachers avoid theoretical chaos?

Another way of considering the question is to ask whether the intended learning in drama can be stated as propositional knowledge if not before the lesson perhaps afterwards. It should be noted here that the concern is not primarily whether the lesson has been successful and hence whether any actual learning has taken place (important though this question is). Drama teachers are often concerned with how they can assess that learning has taken place without always facing the central question, do they or should they always know what it was intended that the pupils should learn? The former question may often seem impenetrable because the latter question has not been given enough attention. (As regards assessment, teachers of drama are not alone in having problems for the important learning areas in any subject may well be those which are difficult to assess; I have in mind true historical or mathematical understanding which accompanies the learning or true literary appreciation rather than the manipulation of superficially acquired ideas).

43 J. Allen, Drama in Schools: Its Theory and Practice (Heinemann, 1979), p. 26.

It may seem strange to suggest that the learning areas in drama might be identified after the lesson. What I have in mind are the kind of propositions identified by Bolton when he identifies attitudes at the start of the drama, "police are the enemy" and "we trust this leader without question" and contrasts those with final attitudes as a direct result of the drama, "a policeman is a man with a home and a family" and "we should have questioned!"⁴⁴ The question as to whether the intended learning (intended here on the part of the teacher) can be made explicit in propositions is an important one. One could imagine that a sort of 'post syllabus' could be drawn up after a course to identify the learning areas which would make the whole question of justification more explicit and public. Attractive though this possibility might sound in terms of providing a clear justification for the subject for scrutiny, it would not adequately reflect the practice of many teachers of the subject. There may be some cases where teachers might be able to reduce the intended learning to propositions but not all drama is of this kind. Many of Bolton's lessons would not be easily subject to this treatment neither would most of the lessons described in Drama as a Learning Medium.⁴⁵

44 G. Bolton, op. cit. (1979), p. 41.

45 B.J. Wagner, Dorothy Heathcote: Drama as a Learning Medium (Washington D.C., National Education Association of the United States, 1976).

Although propositional knowledge cannot be said to provide an adequate account of learning in drama, procedural knowledge must be seen to have a central role. Almost all exponents of drama acknowledge that they are concerned with the fact that pupils should gain "mastery of the process itself"⁴⁶, that drama should involve "learning about form".⁴⁷ One question which needs consideration and is often ignored is whether this learning will be made explicit or will be tacitly acquired in the drama process. Although this is an important question for the teacher in terms of teaching method (and will be discussed in a future paper on meaning in terms of the way form influences meaning) for the purpose of the present discussion it is enough to say that such learning is a form of procedural knowledge which can be identified by the teacher.

A more important point to make here is that this learning cannot be considered the sole purpose of the drama for one would be tempted to ask what the point is. Indeed, exponents of drama, although they see form as being important, do so in as much as it relates to other types of learning in the drama. In answer to the question, 'what are the pupils learning in drama?' the answer may come 'they are learning to do drama' and while that answer is accurate and may determine the nature of whatever else is being learned it can only be considered part of what is happening.

46 L. McGregor et al., op. cit. (1977), p. 51.

47 G. Bolton, op. cit. (1979), p. 114. Perhaps this statement needs qualification. There was a period when teachers were trained to deny the 'how' of drama and the view still lingers.

Another possible answer to the question is to avoid the specification of the learning because of the subjective nature of knowledge. This would be to use in a fairly extreme way the type of thinking which has emerged in writing about the 'new sociology of education' which Pring has usefully summarised in his chapter 4 of "Knowledge and Schooling".⁴⁸ This is the view which sees knowledge as being socially constructed, ongoing and changing through social interaction and which appears to have some influence on the way some exponents think about drama in education.⁴⁹ This perspective challenges the treatment of knowledge as a commodity to be handed on to passive recipients and stresses the role of the learner in determining what shall count as knowledge, thus emphasising the essentially ideological nature of the whole enterprise. I do not propose to give a detailed account of 'subjective knowing' (Pring's chapter identifies the relevant reading), but it is worth considering some of Pring's reservations, having identified some positive aspects of the approach:

"Despite these areas of agreement, and despite the welcome I readily extend to anyone who questions the reification of social reality (e.g. treating disciplined ways of thinking as 'disciplines') or who criticises the disconnection of product from the mode of the production or who insists upon respect for the alternative ways of looking at things introduced to school by the pupil, the more

48 R. Pring, Knowledge and Schooling (Open Books, 1976).

49 In particular, the authors of Learning Through Drama, op. cit. (1977).

extravagant claims that accompany such excellent points seem to me simply mistaken. There is a sense in which knowledge is independent of individual knowers and there are limits to the degree to which individuals can seek to 'redefine knowledge' or to 'negotiate meaning'.⁵⁰

Pring wishes to argue against the adoption of extreme relativist views. The phrase in this quotation, "There is a sense in which ..." means that the author does not here go into the intricacies of the epistemological questions involved. Polanyi would argue, for example, that knowledge is not independent of the act of knowing and would characterise the expression "p is true" as being an act of assertion: "The misleading form of the expression 'p is true' which disguises an act of commitment in the form of a sentence stating a fact leads to logical paradoxes".⁵¹ Basically Polanyi's general view supports what Pring has to say for in discussing the personal mode of knowing he warns against extreme subjectivity from the start. There is, he says, a personal participation of the knower in all acts of understanding. But this does not make our understanding subjective. "Comprehension is neither an arbitrary act nor a passive experience, but a responsible act claiming universal validity".⁵²

It seems clear from what various writers say that theories which stress subjectivity are in danger of being misinterpreted. In discussing the relevance of Kierkegaard's thought on education, Pojman discusses the importance of the idea that whatever is known

50 R. Pring, op. cit. (1976), p. 70.

51 M. Polanyi, op. cit. (1958), p. 254.

52 ibid., p. vii.

must be known in a way appropriate to the knower and in this respect only what is 'personally appropriate' is truly known. He also comments, however, that Kierkegaard has been accused of subjectivism based on a misunderstanding of the epigram 'subjectivity is truth':

"It is not at all the case that my subjectivity determines objective truth, but it is simply that subjectivity is the only way to approach the truth or to understand the truth."⁵³

What relevance does all this have to drama and in particular to the present question about defining the learning which takes place? In one sense the stress on subjective knowing⁵⁴ strengthens the case for drama for it is in the nature of the subject that the participants be actively engaged in the process. It will also have relevance to the fact that drama will be valuable in the teaching of other subjects as a way of gaining the personal engagement necessary with the material in hand. But the problem with drama as a subject in its own right remains. It is the public element of the whole process which remains a problem. It may be that some educationists in reinstating the objective component in the curriculum against the excesses of some child-centred theorists do not take sufficient account of

53 L.P. Pojman, "Kierkegaard's theory of subjectivity and education", in B. Curtis and W. Mays (eds.), Phenomenology and Education (Methuen, 1978), p. 9.

54 For a more detailed account of the idea of "subjective knowing" than given here see R. Pring, op. cit. (1976), p. 67ff.

the importance of the active participation of the learner but it does not seem to be enough to say that the teacher is providing opportunities for a personal, subjective, coming to terms with experience.⁵⁵ What is it that the teacher is teaching?

So far the discussion, like many analyses of learning has begun from the notion of 'learning x' and has attempted to establish what it is to which that x might possibly refer. Although certain skills will be learned in drama it seems that any attempts to establish learning entirely in terms of propositions does not reflect the way many teachers of drama approach the subject. Neither is it necessary to argue that learning is an inappropriate concept to apply. What is needed is a consideration of alternative notions of learning.

(v) Learning and Understanding

It has been suggested that to make sense of many of the claims for learning in drama it is necessary to acknowledge cases of learning where the object of learning is not specified in propositions. In this section it will be argued that in fact attempts to be specific in this way about what is being learned may be to misunderstand the nature of the learning in the context of drama and to distort the drama experience.⁵⁶ By virtue of this

55 It might be argued that it is enough provided we can spell out in detail what is happening. I would be inclined to go along with this argument provided it is possible to give meaning to the notion of 'teaching'.

56 This will relate to the exploration of 'drama as art' in Chapter Six.

fact, the idea of unintentional learning explored earlier will be of particular relevance. Further, it will be argued that despite the stress on unintentional learning the concept teaching (for which intention is an important criterion) can still be given significant import by considering what it means to say that understanding has taken place. However, before embarking on these arguments it will be useful to make some general comments on the concepts learning and understanding and the way they relate to each other.

Although 'drama for learning' is perhaps the most widely quoted phrase for representing what is thought to justify the subject, the phrase 'drama for understanding' is also used. The Schools Council project employs the term 'learning' and reserves 'understanding' for the idea of the pupils showing what they have understood: "Children should become increasingly able to translate attitudes and ideas about various issues into dramatic statements which reflect their understanding".⁵⁷ Bolton, in his book, speaks of learning as being the central goal for drama teachers, although the term understanding is given preference as the book progresses. In a review of Bolton's book, Davis makes the following comment,

"It seems to me that there is a central problem with the concept of 'drama for understanding' in that it seems to imply a reflective process divorced from

57 L. McGregor et al., op. cit. (1977), p. 144.

action, whereas what is central to drama in education must be changed practice in the world."⁵⁸

Presumably Davis would argue that 'drama for learning' implies 'changed practice in the world' although he does not make this explicit in the review. In any case the relationship between understanding, learning and change needs some discussion.

Although it may seem that understanding implies passive reflection, there is in fact no necessary connection between either of the concepts learning or understanding and changed action in the world. On the other hand, there is a sense in which both concepts imply change. This needs explaining. Neither concept necessarily implies action: it makes sense to say that somebody has learned or understood that things should stay as they are or that somebody has learned or understood the need to vote for a particular party - either concept can be associated with changed action as a consequence but the relationship can only ever be contingent. On the other hand, there is a sense in which both concepts are necessarily related to change in the subject. It is impossible to speak of someone learning x or understanding x without acknowledging that they have changed in some way - although the change may be described as a propensity to act in a certain way under certain circumstances. Even theoretical understanding of a mathematical formula means that the individual would be able to give certain answers to

58 D. Davis, Review of G. Bolton's Towards a Theory of Drama in Education in Scypt Journal (6, 1980), p. 13.

certain questions if asked those questions. To speak of understanding as 'purely a reflective process' is likely to lead to the mistaken view that the concept of understanding itself can be understood purely as a mental process, a point to which this discussion will return. We might wish to say that understanding implies 'transformed ways of being' to avoid the emphasis on behaviour in 'changed practice in the world'.

The concepts learning and understanding must be seen to be very closely connected, particularly in the context of education. Only the crudest form of rote learning would exclude understanding - some writers would not want to call this learning at all. It is not necessary to pronounce on linguistic usage here, suffice it to say that for the purposes of education that it makes sense to claim that learning must involve understanding except in some very rare cases where rote learning is thought to be of value.⁵⁹

Would learning to swim or ride a bicycle involve understanding? Again there is no simple answer because it depends on the use of 'understanding'. Woods and Barrow make a useful distinction between 'mechanical understanding' (knowing what to do) and 'reasoned understanding' (knowing why one does what one does). They comment,

59 The rote learning of a poem may help understanding of that poem. This serves to reinforce the connection between learning and understanding.

"... while there may well be a conceptual link between education and understanding, the link is with reasoned understanding and not with mechanical understanding. Stress on the latter and its associated accomplishments is likely to produce inflexible automata rather than thinking people."⁶⁰

The important point here is that it is the educational context and a particular view of education which determines the important connection between learning and understanding.

Without wishing to open up again the question whether learning necessarily involves knowledge or for that matter whether the knowledge conditions commonly quoted in epistemology constitute an adequate account of knowledge, the relationship between knowledge and understanding can be seen by considering the knowledge conditions⁶¹: it is important that p is true and that the person in question has good grounds for his belief which includes the notion that he understands p. (A similar point was made by Ryle when he argued that 'knowing how ...' is involved in 'knowing that ...',⁶².

If learning involves understanding does understanding always involve learning? Appeal to linguistic usage reveals that it is possible to understand a painting or understand what somebody is saying without learning appearing to enter the picture. However,

60 R.G. Woods and R. St. C. Barrow, An Introduction to Philosophy of Education (Methuen, 1975), p. 48.

61 Conditions which have been applied for it to make sense that someone knows something to be the case or knows 'that p'.

62 G. Ryle, op. cit. (1949).

the relationship between the two concepts is not as simple as that. It is possible to sit in a lecture attempting to understand what the lecturer has to say and to describe the process as a learning process. In the same way a day spent looking at paintings in a gallery, trying to understand them may be said to be a valuable learning experience. Any attempt to make a definitive statement about the concepts would probably be challenged by appeal to contrary linguistic usage. It is enough to say that the two concepts are very closely related and it is not necessary at this stage to say whether 'learning' or 'understanding' more appropriately represents a justification for the teaching of drama. What will be important, however, will be to explain more closely the concept of understanding because this must be seen as a necessary component in the notion of 'drama for learning'.

Consider the following definitions of understanding: "able to relate that which is to be understood to some wider, more or less determinate framework", or "able to link that which is to be understood to what is already learned or understood"⁶³ and "Understanding is relating; it is fitting things into a context".⁶⁴ One feature common to these views is that the notion of understanding itself can only be understood in relation to particular contexts. To say that someone has understood what someone else

63 R.G. Woods and R.St.C. Barrow, op. cit. (1975), p. 49.

64 M. Midgley, Beast and Man (Methuen, 1979), p. 18.

has said means not just that definitions can be provided for the words of the language but that there is an appreciation of the context in which the words can be said to have meaning, "If language is to be a means of communication there must be agreement not only in definitions but also (queer as this may sound) in judgements".⁶⁵

The importance of context is clear when we ask how we know that someone has understood x. When we make a statement of that kind we are making a statement about a person's propensity to act in a certain way. If a person understands that Paris is the capital of France this means among other things that in answer to the question, "Is Paris in France?" he will answer yes, to the question, "Is Paris the capital of Spain?", no and so on. Understanding involves the grasp of concepts and principles.

This stress on context is one of Wittgenstein's important insights when he claimed that understanding is not a mental process. Vesey has pointed out that this claim can easily cause confusion because it is not so much a denial that understanding is a mental process but rather than the picture we often tend to have of a mental process is an ill-informed one.

"If anything is to be called a mental process then surely it is such things as understanding, imagining, and remembering. No; the point is that talk of a mental process makes us think of understanding (meaning,

65 L. Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations (First published, 1953) (Basil Blackwell, 1976), p. 88e, no. 242.

imagining, remembering, etc.) in a way which blinds us to our actual use of the words 'understand' ('mean', etc.)"⁶⁶

What Wittgenstein wanted to reject was an explanation of understanding as being an event occurring in an occult entity, the mind. If it is claimed that someone has understood x it would be possible in theory to test that understanding in a variety of contexts. If those tests fail it would be difficult to see what understanding x could mean. The words 'in theory' were inserted in the last sentence because to suggest that understanding can be tested in this way in some complete sense is to imply that understanding is an all or nothing affair which is contrary to what has been implied in the argument so far. What the stress on context gives is a more organic rather than additive view of the notion of understanding. It is not simply a question of understanding 'a', then b, c, d and so on. "People can come to understand something over a period of time, deepen their understanding of a subject or come to a greater understanding ..."⁶⁷ To the question "Do you understand 'a'?" at the start of a drama lesson the pupil may honestly answer 'yes' yet increase his understanding of 'a' in that lesson. That change in understanding will not readily be reduced to propositions.

66 G. Vesey, Understanding Wittgenstein. Royal Institute of Philosophy Lectures, Vol. 7, 1972/3 (Macmillan Press, 1974).

67 R.G. Woods and R.St.C. Barrow, op. cit. (1975), p. 51.

Definitions of understanding offered above stressed the notion of 'connecting'⁶⁸ but in an article entitled "Education and Human Being", Elliott gives a broader conception of the mental powers which are called into play for the sake of achieving understanding. It is fair to describe him as giving a more detailed analysis of what is involved in the notion of 'connecting'.

"Such powers are exercised, for example, in retention and anticipation; in synthesis and synopsis; in the reduction of wholes to parts; in the discernment of relations and discovery of structures; in 'bracketing' properties and aspects; in discovering the objects of feelings and impressions; in guesswork; in pushing ideas to their limits; in shifts of perspective of many kinds; in weighing pros and cons and sensing the balance and so on."⁶⁹

The development of the kind of powers described is what gives more content to the notion of understanding but also, and this is the central point, may give content to the notion of teaching in drama.

To make this clear an example may help. A teacher may make up his mind that the topic for the lesson will be obedience. He is in effect saying that the pupils will increase their understanding of obedience. It might help the teacher to consider what sorts of flaws and naiveties are likely to be found in the pupils'

68 D.W. Hamlyn, in R.S. Peters (ed.), op. cit. (1973). He describes learning as follows, "all learning is in one way or another connecting things, and it is in this way that experience develops", p. 187.

69 R.K. Elliott, "Education and Human Being", in S. Brown (ed.), Philosophers Discuss Education. Proc. of Royal Inst. of Phil. Conference, 1973 (Macmillan, 1975).

existing notions of obedience. The details of the lesson for the purposes of this discussion are less important so let us suppose that he sets up an improvisation set in an army barracks. It is relatively easy to suggest that the pupils explore the idea of obedience but the question is whether the understanding can be more precisely identified in propositions. Do they come to an understanding "... that sometimes orders should not be obeyed? ... that orders should be evaluated? ... that it is easier to make someone obey you if you treat them well? ... that obedience without trust is dangerous?"

Now of the changes in understanding described, the precise content of the drama is going to influence the sort of insight the pupils are going to have: a play about a sergeant who makes unreasonable demands on his men is going to be very different in emphasis from one in which the sergeant has to work hard to win the men over. But how far does it make sense to attempt to identify the understanding in propositions of the kind mentioned? To begin with, the increased understanding (let us assume the lesson was successful) will not be made explicit by the teacher; the idea of the teacher for this particular lesson (or many though not all drama lessons) saying at the end, "Do you now understand p?" seems odd. As suggested above, if asked the same question at the start, the answer might well have been yes. The precise shift of appraisal or insight will be ineffable, subjective, individual but it will have been prompted by (a) the teacher's structure of the work and (b) closely related, the teacher's

concern to test beliefs, question assumptions, reveal relations between ideas, etc. If the teacher had sent the pupils away in groups to prepare and present a play about army life they may well have increased their understanding from each other, or by virtue of giving form and expression to their ideas but not by virtue of being taught.

A framework of the kind identified here which stresses the role of the teaching in concentrating objectives on development of mental powers is in accord with what many drama exponents have to say implicitly. In describing the different forms of modification which may take place as a result of drama Bolton makes the following comment,

"Various metaphorical terms are used in an attempt to describe the insightful change that can take place: refining, extending, widening, making more flexible, shifting a bias, breaking a stereotype, giving new slant, challenging, casting doubt, questioning assumptions, facing decisions, seeing new implications, anticipating consequences, trying alternatives, widening range of choice, changing perspective. Vague as this terminology is and intangible as the result may be in research terms ..."⁷⁰

This comprehensive list while describing the change of understanding which may develop in the drama also can be read as giving very real meaning to the concept of teaching in drama. The only quarrel might be with the implied apology, for the terminology is far from vague and any attempt to be more precise in identifying the understanding in propositions is likely to misrepresent the actual understanding involved.

70 G. Bolton, op. cit. (1979), p. 45.

The type of justification for the subject which is being identified and analysed can be related to broad concepts of education. In the article by Elliott from which the earlier quotation was drawn, the author presents an overall argument for curriculum justification which presents a challenge to the view held by Hirst and others because it brings with it a different view of the notion of mental development. Whereas Hirst emphasises the development of mind in terms of acquiring mastery in each of the forms of knowledge, Elliott argues in support of a notion of mental development as development of mental powers described earlier. He wants to argue that it is the case that understanding can be developed outside the forms of knowledge or in a single form even though the systematic disciplines are likely to provide great scope for the exercise of the powers of understanding. What his argument contains is a greater stress on the private/subjective than the public/objective in the development of mind.⁷¹

Some of the important comparisons between drama and other curriculum subjects have been identified elsewhere. One of these is that in drama there is not usually a readily identifiable course content or syllabus. A number of publications, perhaps in an effort to make drama more closely resemble other 'text book' subjects, attempt to set out lessons to be taught with various year groups. This seems, however, to be in contrast with

71 R.K. Elliott, in S. Brown (ed.), op. cit. (1975).

other exponents who suggest that one of the subject's strengths is that it can harness the pupils' natural quest to explore their own particular areas of interest and concern. It seems important to evaluate drama's real contribution to the curriculum rather than attempt to justify the subject by forcing it to resemble other disciplines.

Elliott has described the importance of what he calls educating 'common understanding' as opposed to the theoretical knowledge of the established discipline which is more systematically organised. He suggests that common understanding does not limit itself to any special area of being but concerns itself with anything which will yield to it. What he has in mind seems exactly the sort of understanding of human situations which the teacher of drama is likely to promote. He also has a particularly interesting reason for suggesting that education of the natural understanding is likely to provide an appropriate context for the development of mental powers,

"It seems a good means of fostering the life of the mind, since the students have to think for themselves, yet when they express their views would not run immediately into an entanglement of ready-to-hand disciplinary criticism."⁷²

Many teachers must have faced the problem of coping with the often contradictory demands of having the pupils both feel confident in their own judgements and criticisms yet at the same time appreciate the rules and standards of the subject in question.

72 R.K. Elliott, in S. Brown (ed.), op. cit. (1975), p. 66.

This particular problem has been identified by Passmore,

"How then to reconcile the two requirements: the need for building up a body of knowledge, a set of habits, from which criticism can take its departure, and the need for introducing children from an early stage to the practice of critical discussion."⁷³

Most analyses of teaching, as suggested earlier, stress the notion of "an initiation into the rational life, a life in which the critical quest for reasons is a dominant and integrating motive".⁷⁴

In suggesting, therefore, that implicit in many approaches to drama is the idea that content can be given to the concept teaching by considering the various strategies employed by the teacher to develop understanding, this analysis is not far removed from the mainstream of philosophical thinking on teaching. The difference is that whereas most analyses assume that the teacher is teaching a body of knowledge to which must be added the notion of rationality, in drama the teaching is not conceived in the context of such a discipline but finds a context in the area of common understanding.⁷⁵

Because the idea of common understanding is important to drama it is worth quoting Elliott at some length here.

73 J. Passmore, "On Teaching To Be Critical", in R.S. Peters (ed.), op. cit. (1967), p. 205.

74 I. Scheffler, Conditions of Knowledge: An Introduction to Epistemology and Education (Univ. of Chicago Press, 1965), p. 107.

75 Elliott uses both the terms "common understanding" and "natural understanding".

"Unlike understanding within the disciplines, common understanding does not limit itself to any special area of being, but concerns itself with anything which will yield to it. It is not necessarily undisciplined, for discipline, as the following of rules counter to immediate inclination, may be exercised whenever a person is tempted to resort to arbitrariness in thinking. Common understanding is largely embodied in practical capabilities and mastery of language, both of which are acquired largely pre-reflectively but there is also a considerable truistic common lore concerning human beings and the world. Considered as a whole, this area of common knowledge is rich in content and subtle in distinctions but, compared with theoretical knowledge, lacking in depth and systematic organisation."⁷⁶

The apparent lack of systematic content in drama lessons and syllabi (the content often varies according to the choice of the group) need not be a matter for concern as long as the teacher has a clear theoretical foundation on which his approach is based of the kind which the account of mental development and natural understanding given by Elliott provides.

To conclude this section, it will be necessary to reiterate a point which was made in the introduction to this chapter: the discussion of learning and understanding in the context of drama without reference to feeling must be considered incomplete. In his article entitled "Education and the Ethics of Belief", Dearden includes the observation made by Bacon that "the human understanding is no dry light" meaning that what is understood or believed can be determined by a variety of factors including wishes, desires, emotions.⁷⁷ To think of understanding as being

76 R.K. Elliott, in S. Brown (ed.), op. cit. (1975), p. 62.

77 R.F. Dearden, "Education and the Ethics of Belief", British Journal of Educational Studies (Vol. XXII, No. 1, February 1974), p. 9.

a simple matter of logically evaluating evidence would be to promote a misplaced contrast between reason and passion. Rationality, therefore, will be further discussed in the chapter on feeling.

(vi) Teaching and Learning in Drama

Although this study is concerned with looking at justifications for drama, it is not purely a neutral, descriptive work. (In fact, it is difficult to imagine what that would amount to because any description is at least selective). This point was made without specificity in chapter one which discussed the application of philosophy to drama in education but it can now be given some substance in the context of this discussion of learning. In order to demonstrate some of the implications of this analysis, the arguments presented so far will be related more specifically to drama but they will first be briefly summarised.

Although 'learning through drama' is a phrase which is intended to signify a change in direction in the way the subject is conceived, that change of emphasis cannot be easily identified in educational terms by looking at the concept learning alone. One of the strengths of drama is that it employs a 'natural' form of learning which includes a prominent tacit element and does not require that the pupils 'set about' learning. Attempts to restrict the concept of learning by including intention and specifying the learning in propositions are likely

to distort this aspect of the subject. This view may look suspiciously close to a justification of an extreme, child-centred, free, self-expression drama which many exponents would want to reject. By emphasising teaching however, it is possible to avoid this route but the stress on teaching leaves a problem. If the subject is not primarily conceived as an initiation into a public form of knowledge, how is content given to the notion of teaching? The notion of form is important; the teacher will be teaching the pupils how to do drama, but this cannot be the whole story. The answer to the question was seen to lie in an explanation of understanding. The teacher will be concerned with developing understanding.

In the last chapter which looked at the concept aims, it was suggested that a distinction could be made between teacher aims and learning outcome. It can now be more clearly seen that the teacher can be motivated by particular aims without having to define and therefore confine the nature and extent of the learning in drama; assessment of the drama will not depend on a strict correlation between teacher objectives and learning outcome. The analysis given places due emphasis on the important subjective and social elements in the learning in drama without leaving the teacher aimless and the educational concepts empty.

What are some of the implications of this analysis? Firstly, any attempt to explain the content of learning without reference to teaching and at the same time to disparage earlier approaches to the subject which stressed a free form of self-expression is

likely to run into problems. To illustrate this point reference will be made to an article by Robinson which was discussed elsewhere.⁷⁸ Although in this article he is not directing attention to the concept learning, some of his conclusions illustrate the point being made. When writing about the way the creative mind comes to terms with reality and in particular the active involvement of the individual in coming to terms with experience, he comments,

"We interpret the world as we do through a process of successive approximations. This is the basic process of the creative mind: testing new relationships, fresh formulations and novel variations of ideas in the successive interpretation and reinterpretation of experience."⁷⁹

So much seems fair enough and it would seem that what the author is describing is part of what is meant by understanding or learning. The problem comes when he describes self-expression drama as being mere giving out energy and of no value. It is easy to see what he is getting at because he rightly wants to move away from a form of drama in which the pupils are only engaged in dramatic playing but the assertion that dramatic playing is of no value or is not a means of learning makes little sense. He is led on the one hand to a justification of drama on the basis of the way the mind makes sense of experience but on the other hand to a denial that this process continues in dramatic playing.

78 K. Robinson, "Drama, Theatre and Social Reality", in Exploring Theatre and Education (Heinemann, 1980).

79 *ibid.*, p. 162.

What I am suggesting is that the prevailing tendency to evaluate approaches to drama purely on the basis of whether they have value or not as a form of learning is misguided. It is possible, for example, to extract arguments from Bolton's book and by placing them out of context present a very confusing picture. This point was made in Chapter Two. On the one hand, the theoretical basis for drama is based on a realisation of the importance of learning in make-believe play (Chapter 4) yet the teacher who relies on dramatic play in drama "encourages by default the development in his pupils of the habit of wallowing in meaningless playing ..."⁸⁰ Of course, to extract the points in this way is to distort the argument because the book is very much concerned with the quality of experience and the nature of the meaning created in drama which in turn will depend on the teacher,

"I am suggesting that child play can undergo a 'change of gear' that gives it a dramatic art form. Children in their playing may accidentally or consciously move into this change of gear we can call drama. In school drama children may slip out of gear back into playing unless the teacher has a firm hold on the gear lever."⁸¹

If it makes little sense to disqualify dramatic play as a process of learning it is also difficult to disqualify what the Schools Council describe as "presenting statements to others", that is drama which is intended to make a statement or clarify what the pupils already know.⁸² The authors rightly see this

80 G. Bolton, op. cit. (1979), p. 29.

81 ibid., p. 32.

82 L. McGregor et al., op. cit. (1977), p. 51.

as a form of learning but must be seen to differ in their view from other exponents of the subject when they give it the same status as other forms of drama. Writers like Heathcote, Bolton, Fines and Verrier (although they see a place for a variety of types of work) would want to place greater emphasis on 'living through'⁸³ drama rather than just an approach which directs the pupils to prepare a statement to show to others, although on the basis of the analysis given here both promote understanding in some way.

At the start of this paper it was emphasised that the whole discussion without reference to feeling and meaning would be incomplete but that a framework would be established into which the discussion of drama as art would fit. Although the notion of internal/external action is one which will be dealt with in subsequent chapters it seems necessary to make reference to this aspect of drama in the context of this discussion of learning. In stressing the educational concept teaching as being an important factor in distinguishing approaches to the subject, it may be thought that this discussion is neglecting a central distinction between external action and mental activity which may be evoked as a distinguishing factor without reference to the role of the teacher. The argument might be as follows. Some exponents of drama (including advocates of mime, exercises, as well as improvisation) looked for precision in physical action ('show me how you

83 This statement is less true of their more recent work.

would look if you were concentrating on opening a safe'). Exponents of drama as a learning process include the extra dimension of internal action which relates the cognitive to a feeling element. I suggest that this argument again only makes sense as a distinguishing factor if reference is made to the notion of teaching.

Firstly, there are dangers in making artificial distinctions between thought and action. Many exponents concerned with external action might, like Way, have stressed the importance of intuition. In his approach to the subject, Way is concerned to contrast traditional academic education which appeals to the mind and drama which is involved in the realm of direct experience. He considers intuition "the most important single factor in the development of inner resourcefulness".⁸⁴ Way contrasts intuition with intellect, with an examinable process of understanding and thinking and associates it with "an imaginative and emotional and therefore intangible process of relishing and enjoying, irrespective of whether or not there is full understanding".⁸⁵ It would be misleading then to say that the teacher who adopts Way's approach has not given thought to a dimension beyond the physical, it is simply that he leaves it to take care of itself. Consequently, when he comes to actually describing activities for pupils and teacher the stress is very much on the actual physical activities in which they can engage.

84 B. Way, Development Through Drama (Longman, 1967), p. 5.

85 *ibid.*, p. 5.

Thus the pupil who has asked 'what is it like to be blind?' (Way's example at the start of the book), and is blindfold and told to walk out of the room may have the attitude 'this is fun', 'this reminds me of pin the tail on the donkey', 'how embarrassing', 'I wish we could play blind man's bluff' unless the teacher attempts to engage him at a deeper level. This discussion will be extended in Chapter Six on Feeling. The important point to make here is that to assume that 'internal action' was not a factor in the experience of the participants in the approach to drama advocated, for example, by Slade and Way is to make an odd claim that what is 'internal' can somehow be separated from 'external' action.

One of the general points of this chapter has been to suggest that the notion of 'drama for learning' can be more fruitfully employed as a means of distinguishing different approaches to the subject if it is allied to a concept of teaching. One of the implications of this view was that it is possible to evaluate drama lessons on this basis; as already stated, lessons which consist entirely of pupils preparing statements to show to others might be judged to lack a meaningful teaching content. This does not mean, of course, that every event in every drama lesson must be linked somehow with teaching activity. A lesson spent playing games may in some circumstances be thought to be desirable but a teaching enterprise which consists entirely of the unthinking playing of games may be disqualified as teaching. This idea that evaluation may take place more usefully if the enterprise is

considered (i.e. what activities does the teacher characteristically engage in) rather than if attention is directed at a single activity or single lesson can be extended to evaluation of the outcome of the drama. Because the nature of drama is such that it tends to be full of significant, tense, dramatic moments there is a tendency to think that the learning or understanding must always likewise be sudden, significant moments of insight. It would be wrong at this stage in the discussion to suggest categorically that this is not the case. Suffice it to say that on the basis of the discussion of understanding given here there is far more room in approaches to the subject for a justification of drama on the basis of a more gradual increase in understanding of human situations by virtue of an engagement in drama over a period of some time. This suggestion brings with it some problems because it raises the question of how the specific content of the drama relates to the increase in understanding which in turn can be seen to be a question related to the meaning of the drama. Any further comment on the nature of the understanding in drama must also take into account the element of feeling for to suggest that understanding in drama develops gradually over a period of time might seem to deny the importance of feeling as well as the importance of the context. These questions must now be discussed.

CHAPTER FIVE

MEANING

(i) Introduction

As stated in Chapter Two, problems about meaning have given rise to much philosophical discussion and theorising and for that reason it seems important to identify the limits of what this present chapter sets out to achieve. It will not be the intention to survey and assess various theories of meaning, to offer an explanation of meaning and then use that explanation to measure against various uses of meaning by drama exponents. An approach of that kind would be in danger of simply making linguistic recommendations about the use of the concept without looking closely at the context and purpose which a particular use of meaning is intended to serve. It will, however, be possible to comment on the dangers present in certain uses of the concept by writers on drama if there is not a sufficient degree of awareness by them that the concept has a variety of uses. To illustrate those dangers examples from the writings of three drama exponents will be considered. This approach is different from one which seeks to give an explanation of meaning, a point which will become clearer in the course of this chapter.

Section one will further the discussion which was begun in Chapter Two on concepts in drama but this time some of the uses of meaning by drama writers will be related to a wider discussion about what philosophers have had to say about the concept.

Section two will look at the notion of aesthetic meaning to see how it might differ from other uses of meaning and to assess its value for teachers of drama.

Section three, leading on from the previous discussion, will consider the importance of form and its relationship to meaning. Here the discussion will particularly link with the last chapter on learning and will consider how content may be given to the notion of teaching by considering form in drama.

Section four will look at consciousness and intention in relation to meaning. Here in particular the dangers of arbitrarily limiting and defining meaning will be identified.

(ii) Meaning and Drama

A moment's reflection reveals that meaning is used in a variety of ways. It can be used to express intention: 'that is not what I mean', significance: 'that means a lot to me', effect: 'this means trouble'. Hospers identifies eight meanings of the word meaning¹ and Ogden and Richards list sixteen definitions of the term.² Much of the philosophical discussion of meaning has centred on what it is to say that a word has meaning but is important to realise that many uses of meaning are not limited to word meaning. In drama, for example, reference can be made to the meaning of utterances within the drama, the meaning

1 J. Hospers, An Introduction to Philosophical Analysis (Routledge, 1956), p. 11.

2 C.K. Ogden and I.A. Richards, The Meaning of Meaning (Kegan Paul, 1930), p. 186.

of actions, the meaning of the drama as a whole. Questions about whether the drama is meaningful are different types of questions which have to do with the value of the activity but can nevertheless serve to compound the problems in discussion.

Philosophers tend to point to the fact that it is one thing to be able to use the concept of meaning but it is quite another matter to attempt to say what meaning is or give an explanation of meaning. Thus Hospers states,

"When we ask 'What is the meaning of this word?' or 'What is the meaning of this strange behaviour?' or 'You've found the footprints, but what do they mean?' people do not generally have trouble in understanding us, as is shown by the fact that they give the right kind of answers, the sort of thing we had in mind in asking the question."³

Ryle suggests that it is one thing to ask what is meant by "vitamin" or "abracadabra" but that it is quite another sort of thing to ask "what are meanings"⁴ and Taylor, while talking about the making of moral and aesthetic judgements claims,

"... although the sentences used in making these judgements are clearly meaningful, although in a sense we must know what we mean by them since we use them, no one can say just what they do mean."⁵

Faced by these sorts of comments it might be tempting to wonder where exactly the problem lies. If we know how to use

3 J. Hospers, "Meaning". Extract from Meaning and Truth in the Arts (North Carolina Press, 1946), pp. 74-78, reprinted in, M. Weitz, Problems in Aesthetics (Macmillan Company, N.Y., 1959), p. 242.

4 G. Ryle, "The Theory of Meaning", in C.A. Mace (ed.), British Philosophy in the Mid-Century (Allen and Unwin, 1957), p. 239.

5 D.M. Taylor, Explanation and Meaning (Cambridge University Press, 1970), p. 110.

'meaning' why pursue questions about the meaning of 'meaning'? And how do we make sense of Taylor's claim that we know what we mean but no-one can say just what they do mean? In an article on theories of meaning, Ryle identifies two sources of philosophical preoccupation with meaning. He acknowledges that meaning has been the concern of philosophers throughout history but wishes to explain the more recent direct concentration on the problem, what he says could be described as "the occupational disease of twentieth century Anglo-Saxon and Austrian philosophy".⁶ He identifies its dual origin in logic and in questions about the nature of philosophy, two areas which as he shows are closely related.

For the purposes of this discussion a brief summary of the broad conclusions Ryle reaches will be sufficient without going into an account of the details of his argument. He points to the development of views of meaning by Mill, Frege, Russell and Wittgenstein and the abandonment of earlier mistaken views of how words have meaning. The interest in meaning arose from their writings on logic. The logician in studying rules of inference, Ryle suggests, has to talk about the components of arguments:

"(Now) the same argument may be expressed in English or in French or in any other language; and if it expressed in English, there may still be hosts of different ways of wording it. What the logician is exploring is intended to be indifferent to these differences of wording."⁷

6 G. Ryle, "The Theory of Meaning", in C.A. Mace (ed.), op. cit. (1957).

7 *ibid.*, p. 240.

Thus in order to give an explanation of what he is doing the logician has to talk about meanings and consequently is led directly to questions about meaning.

The other main motive from which thinkers have posed the abstract question 'what are meanings?' comes, he suggests, from an account of the nature of philosophy, an attempt that is to distinguish philosophy from psychology and the physical sciences. One view leads to what Ryle calls 'Platonistic conclusions':

"Mental acts and states are the subject matter of psychology. Physical objects and events are the subject matter of the physical and biological sciences. It is left to philosophy to be the science of this third domain which consists largely, though not entirely, of thought-objects or Meanings."⁸

Ryle's comments on the origin of specific philosophical concern about meaning have important consequences. The first of these is that because questions about meaning largely have their origins in logic, a discussion of meaning in drama will not necessarily be illuminated by a simple transportation of a theory from one realm to another, e.g. from logic to aesthetics. It will be suggested that this sort of move has misleading consequences. Secondly, the criticism Ryle makes of the general use of meaning (which as will be seen crops up in writing about drama) is important to bear in mind,

"To say, (therefore), that philosophy is the science of Meanings, though not altogether wrong, is liable to mislead in the same way as it might mislead to say that economics is the science of exchange values. This, too, is true enough but to word this truth in

8 G. Ryle, "The Theory of Meaning", in C.A. Mace (ed.), op. cit. (1957), p. 261. He attributes the origin of this view to Brentano's principle of intentionality and its development by Husserl and Meinong.

this way is liable to make people suppose that the Universe houses, under different roofs, commodities and coins here and exchange values over there."⁹

It will not be a question of condemning out of hand any use of meaning simply because the grammatical form of the sentence seems to postulate an entity 'meaning' but to see whether statements about meaning are likely to be misleading. For example, when Polanyi asserts "man lives in the meanings he is able to discern" it might be tempting to suggest here that the author is treating meaning as an entity.¹⁰ I think that would be a superficial criticism because he is drawing attention to an essential aspect of his own thought: what can be said to have meaning to an individual does so not by virtue of a reflection of something objective which is duplicated in the mind but there is a personal participation of the knower in all acts of understanding. The important point, however, is that it is the context which makes clear how Polanyi is using the term. It should be noticed that it is not an interpretation of his intention which legitimises his use of meaning but its actual context.

The concept of meaning is important to the discussion of drama in Learning Through Drama and in places the use is similar to that by Polanyi quoted above but it will be suggested that the authors' use of the term does lead to problems. In their chapter

9 G. Ryle, "The Theory of Meaning", in C.A. Mace (ed.), op. cit. (1957), p. 263.

10 M. Polanyi and H. Porsch, Meaning (University of Chicago Press, 1975), p. 66.

"Drama as Art", the notion of meaning is introduced in a section entitled "Meaning and Symbolizing". The authors comment on the way an individual experiences the world:

"As we live through the constant barrage of sensory stimulation in which we base our actions in the world, we have first to make sense of what we experience, to give it meaning."¹¹

Here the report makes reference to the writings of Langer and describes the way language plays a central part in the growth of consciousness:

"Our ability to use language is based on our power to represent experience in symbolic form. And the way we represent the world to ourselves, the way we symbolize it, affects how we come to understand it. New concepts may radically affect the meanings we give to experience and later our personal sense of reality."¹²

From this account of the way man makes sense of the world he inhabits, the report arrives very quickly at a definition of acting-out as, "the exploration and representation of meaning using the medium of the whole person".

It could be argued perhaps that the authors of the report were constrained by space but without looking more closely at Langer's notion of symbolic transformation in perception as well as in language and without considering her important distinction between discursive and presentational symbolism, the transition from the way man makes sense of the world in general to a

11 L. McGregor et al., Learning Through Drama (Heinemann, 1977), p. 14.

12 *ibid.*, p. 15.

definition of drama as art which employs the notion of meaning does not take the concept of 'drama as art' very far for the reason that there is not a sufficient distinction between drama and other forms of communication which could reasonably be described in the same way. What makes a conflict in drama different from a real-life conflict on the basis of this distinction? The quotations from the report reveal that the authors derive this definition from the way the individual normally experiences the world but herein lies the problem. How is drama as an art form different from the process described here?

The problem with the definition of acting-out as "the exploration and representation of meaning using the medium of the whole person" is not so much that it is wrong but that it is unhelpful.¹³ On the basis of Langer's theory from which this definition is derived, all experience could be so defined, acts of perception are abstractions of forms to create meaning.

"Our merest sense-experience is a process of formulation. The world that actually meets our senses is not a world of 'things', about which we are invited to discover facts as soon as we have codified the necessary logical language to do so ..."¹⁴

The definition of drama as 'the negotiation of meaning' could similarly be criticised as being unhelpful. First of all, however, it should be said that in the context of the historical development of the subject it is possible to see the authors' intention in

13 L. McGregor et al., op. cit., p. 16.

14 S. Langer, Philosophy in a New Key (Harvard University Press, Mass., 1942), p. 89.

wanting to focus on content in the drama instead of skills or self-expression. Anyone familiar with the development of drama can see the direction the authors wanted to give to the subject. It is clear that the particular definition has become influential and has tended to represent a justification for the subject. In a review of a book for teachers of drama, O'Neill comments that the authors have ignored developments in drama of the last ten years and quotes as one example of that development the definition of drama as 'the negotiation of meaning'.¹⁵ However, I would suggest that the authors of the book in question might be forgiven for asking why their particular work is not entitled to be described in this way. It is not necessary to summarise the review or the book for my general point is that the definition is open to too many interpretations. 'The negotiation of meaning' has become a useful reference for teachers of drama who already know what they mean by that phrase viz à viz the teaching of the subject but it does little to inform the uninitiated.

The actual context of the phrase reveals that what the authors have in mind is the way drama can develop by a process of reciprocal action and reaction,

"If two children face each other across an open floor and one asks, 'what are you standing on?', the response of the other will immediately begin to determine and shape all that is to happen. If he says, for example, 'I'm standing on a raft', the symbolic situation has

15 See, for example, a book review by C. O'Neill, Let's Be Mirrors!, in Times Educational Supplement (30.1.81), p. 24.

begun to be defined and with it the possible area of exploration."¹⁶

It is useful to identify this important method of working in drama but to define drama as "the negotiation of meaning" is arbitrarily to limit drama, to exclude, for example, pre-planned improvisations or work with texts. If it is argued that in fact many sorts of drama can be described in this way then it can be suggested in turn that the definition has been extended so that it has become vacuous.

Other uses of meaning in this chapter are simply redundant. In the concluding comments the answer to the questions, "what is drama? what are its functions?" is as follows, "We have argued that it is an expressive process which is best understood through the idea of symbolization and its role in the discovery and communication of meaning".¹⁷ In this context one might ask what is added to the notion of communication by the addition of the word 'meaning'? Communication has the notion of meaning built into it.

The employment of meaning in Learning Through Drama which is linked with the notion of symbolism in its context can be seen as intended to convey some idea of what it means to say that drama is an art form. The references to Langer point the way to the sort of theory they have in mind but as it stands their use of 'meaning' as a way of justifying drama is not sufficiently detailed.

16 L. McGregor et al., op. cit. (1977), p. 17.

17 ibid., p. 24.

It is now proposed to look at the way Bolton uses 'meaning' in his book but before doing so it will be helpful to consider some observations made by Best (with further comments by Findlay) when he is discussing the use of the term 'meaning' by various writers on movement, and although a detailed discussion of this field is outside the scope of this study, it is useful to consider his general approach and the criticisms he makes to see whether they can be similarly applied to writing on drama.¹⁸ Best's view of meaning is strongly influenced by Wittgenstein who rejected false accounts of how words can be said to have meaning: not by virtue of their correlation with the object for which they stand, nor by their association with an inner mental idea. Meaning is not an "affection of the mind", an "occurrence at the moment of speaking" or a "process which accompanies a word", rather the meaning of a word (for a large class of cases) is determined by its use.¹⁹ It is clear that this is the view which Best is applying rigorously to writings about meaning in movement.

The dictum 'the meaning is the use' has had enormous impact in philosophical thinking about language and is recognised as preventing misleading explanations about meaning like those quoted above. It should be said, however, that writers have pointed to the difficulties associated with this idea. Findlay, for example,

18 D. Best, Philosophy and Human Movement (Allen and Unwin, 1978).

19 L. Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations (Basil Blackwell, 1953), pp.170e; 217e; 218e.

has suggested that in a sense to talk about the use of a word is partly to beg the question because it is an explanation of use which in most cases is the problem. He goes on to suggest that some versions of the doctrine are too extreme,

"By describing the functioning of linguistic expression exclusively in public and social terms, we at once go too far in assuming such approaches to be wholly justified and clear, and we also do not go far enough in refusing to recognise aspects of language not fitting an approach of this sort, or in 'proving' them to be misguided or senseless."²⁰

He goes on at the end of his paper to suggest that the true solution of the problem of meaning must take into account the "intentional nature of thought" although he does not expand on that idea.²¹

It is apparent that Findlay has more sympathy with the sort of explanation of meaning given by Husserl. The relationship between intention and meaning will be discussed later but it is important here to stress a point which was made in the introduction to this paper: it will not be a question of attempting to contrast Wittgenstein/Husserl accounts of meaning but rather to assess how the term is most usefully employed in drama.²² There are important implications here for the application of philosophical

20 J.N. Findlay, "Use, Usage and Meaning", in G.H.R. Parkinson, The Theory of Meaning (Oxford University Press, 1968), p. 124.

21 *ibid.*, p. 127.

22 For a comparison of Husserl/Wittgenstein on Meaning, see J.H. Mohanty, Husserl's Theory of Meaning (Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1969).

thinking to the subject, for the discussion will centre on drama rather than on theories of meaning. It is clear that Best's account of meaning which centres on a philosophical theory leaves no room for intention.

When Best claims that meaning, "whether of thoughts, feelings or movements can be identified only by publicly recognisable criteria", he has to account for such uses as "what does x mean to you?" and does so by pointing to the fact that this question is roughly equivalent to, "what is the significance of x to you?"²³ This leads him to the statement that, "connotation, association, or significance should be clearly distinguished from 'meaning' in the logical sense".²⁴ It is apparent from this comment and from his whole discussion that Best is prescribing a particular use of meaning derived from logical considerations for talk about movement. Among the various uses of the term which he claims are not philosophically justified he criticises "the incoherence of the notion of subjective meaning".²⁵

Now the concept of subjective meaning is important in Bolton's theory of drama in education: "A feature of type D drama (then) is that it is primarily concerned with learning at a subjective level of meaning",²⁶ and elsewhere he suggests that drama and play can be distinguished "by the quality of the subjective meaning

23 D. Best, op. cit. (1978), p. 131.

24 *ibid.*, p. 127.

25 *ibid.*, p. 130.

26 G. Bolton, Towards a Theory of Drama in Education (Longman, 1979), p. 32.

within the activity".²⁷ It should be said that the discussion in the book is allied with what the author calls "objective meaning" and meaning in drama is discussed elsewhere by him,²⁸ but it is the use of "subjective meaning" which is of interest here because it will be suggested that the thinking underlying this usage is vital in distinguishing different approaches to the subject. It will also be necessary to see how this concept stands up to philosophical scrutiny.

The notion of subjective meaning occurs through much of the early part of Bolton's book but it is easier to see why the idea is introduced if a straightforward example is taken which he uses at the start of chapter three. A child jumps over a stream and imagines he is leaping over the heads of crocodiles. To an observer there are no contextual clues as to what the make-believe entails; in Best's terms there are no public criteria. The only way of finding out what is going on in terms of the fiction is to ask the child. It seems perfectly valid to say that in one sense the meaning of his action depends on how he sees it, depends on his imagination. The phrase 'in one sense' is added not in deference to the sort of provisos Best might make about the logical use of 'meaning' but to acknowledge that a psychologist might want to describe the meaning of play in other terms. (It will be suggested later that the idea of layers of meaning is important in aesthetic meaning).

27 G. Bolton, op. cit. (1979), p. 33.

28 G. Bolton, "Creative Drama as an Art Form", London Drama (Vol. 5, No. 6, Spring 1977).

But here lies a dilemma. Do we insist on limiting the use of meaning here on the grounds that it might lead to false philosophical assumptions? Objections of that kind have partly to do with giving explanations of meaning, to say that action has a subjective meaning for the child could lead us to seek to explain meaning by pointing to a process in the boy's head. There is also the danger that use of everyday language, without worrying about the picture of the mind which it implies, may land us with implications about mental life that, if we were clear and explicit about them, we might well not want to accept. Worries about forms of dualism and private language (which concern Best) are important.²⁹ However, and this is the important point, I do not think it necessary or useful to curtail our use of 'meaning' on the basis of these observations and dangers; it is enough to be aware of them.

Wittgenstein does not attempt to circumscribe uses of 'meaning' but to show that they occur in different language games: "The language game 'I mean (or meant) this' (subsequent explanation of a word) is quite different from this one: 'I thought of ... as I said it'.³⁰ It does not seem necessary to draw a boundary around the term meaning as long as its purpose is clear from the context. If it is not, we might want to sharpen the edges of

29 Wittgenstein discusses private language, "Sounds which no one else understands but which I appear to understand ..." in Philosophical Investigations, p. 94ff.

30 L. Wittgenstein, op. cit. (1953), p. 217e.

particular contexts. While talking in general about the drawing of boundaries for concepts, Wittgenstein has the following to say,

"... we can draw a boundary for a special purpose. Does it take that to make the concept usable? Not at all! (Except for the special purpose)."³¹

The defence of the use of meaning in the sort of context quoted above (the use of subjective meaning) which refers to feelings and intentions is important for two reasons. Firstly, it may not just be a question of arbitrary choice ('you call it meaning, I prefer to call it significance') because to deny a use of meaning in this way on logical grounds may result in a distortion of the concept of aesthetic meaning in relation to drama - this will be dealt with in the second section. Secondly, although Bolton's work is at present the only attempt to construct a systematic theory which explains the importance of internal action in educational drama as opposed to just external behaviour, this aspect of the subject has an implicit importance in a number of contemporary approaches to the subject. This will be dealt with in section three and four of this paper but some further comments can be made here.

Midgley, while discussing behaviourist attempts to describe the outer manifestations of behaviour alone, makes the point that most of the terms in which we can describe behaviour effectively do refer to the experience of the agent as well.

31 L. Wittgenstein, op. cit. (1953), p. 33.

"Reference to a conscious subject always slips in, whatever the disinfecting precautions, simply because language has been so framed as to carry it."³²

She goes on to say that descriptions of human activities like laughing or crying are not just describing standard outward movement any more than they are just describing states of mind but such movements made with certain sorts of feelings or intention.

She takes the case of laughter to make her point in more detail. From an outer point of view laughing is just making a strange noise similar to one which might be made by a physical object like a saw or an animal like a hyena. The noise itself, however, is not what we would want to describe as a laugh. Moreover, it makes perfect sense for someone to say "they were all laughing at me" even though no noise has been made and the speaker has been treated with outward politeness by those he is accusing.

Midgley continues as follows:

"If we want to understand such notion, there is no substitute for grasping the kind of subjective, conscious state in which such noises are typically made, and for this you need to be capable of something like it yourself. Someone who does not grasp that state at all will be simply unable to recognise a laugh - to distinguish it reliably from coughs, sobs, snorts, and other noises - let alone to interpret its point and meaning."³³ (my italics).

The point Midgley is making here which in her book is part of an extensive discussion of motives, is important because recent

32 M. Midgley, Beast and Man (Methuen, 1979), p. 106.

33 *ibid.*, p. 107.

developments in educational drama have made it necessary to take more account of the subjective conscious state of the participants although the behaviourist school of thought tends to make people feel uneasy about speaking in those terms. When applied to drama there is a specific problem to consider because there is more likelihood of there being a disjunction between the outward action and the consciousness of the individual. Although Midgley quotes the case of someone objecting that people are laughing at him although there is no physical manifestation, in a pretend situation there can be the reverse, an external manifestation of laughing without what might be thought to be an appropriate feeling and intention. (It will be suggested that this fact is sometimes ignored by some drama exponents and has been ignored in the past history of the subject).

It was suggested that to deny the notion of subjective meaning might be to neglect the importance of the consciousness of the participants in talking about the meaning of the drama - this discussion will be extended later in this chapter. On the other hand, it would be equally misguided to reduce the notion of meaning to the subjective, to talk about subjective meaning as if it is the meaning. Here the matter becomes complex because philosophical assumptions that an expression has meaning by virtue of a correspondence with a mental picture could be thought to be similar to claiming that the meaning of an action is to be determined by the mental state of the agent. However, the likelihood of anyone making the latter claim in the context of writing about drama seems most unlikely.

To repeat then the main point being made at this stage: to employ logical/philosophical arguments to pounce on uses of meaning on the grounds that the form of the sentence leads to false misconceptions about meaning seems to be an unhelpful way of applying philosophical thinking to subjects like movement and drama; uses of meaning should rather be assessed in the context of the purpose they serve in clarifying aspects of the subject in question.

The importance of being clear about uses of meaning becomes apparent because talk about 'the meaning of the drama' can be empty if there is confusion about what is meant by such a statement. In a report of a discussion of a lesson in Exploring Theatre and Education, Heathcote says that the group must "focus on the meaning of the drama", confirming what she has actually said to the group in the lesson, "we only have to find a meaning".³⁴ Now there are a number of contexts which would make it clear what was meant by the instruction to "focus on the meaning": children when reading aloud are often more concerned with pronouncing the words correctly than understanding the meaning of a text; someone might while glancing at a letter direct attention to the handwriting rather than the meaning; conversely Polanyi has pointed out that it is possible for a bilingualist to read a letter and attend to its meaning without afterwards knowing which language it

34 D. Heathcote, "From the Particular to the Universal", in K. Robinson (ed.), Exploring Theatre and Education (Heinemann, 1980), p. 29.

was written in.³⁵ With these cases it is clear what is meant by focussing on the meaning but it is not so clear in the context of a drama lesson. In this case it would seem that meaning is being used to correspond to what might be called theme as opposed to plot. That may be a misinterpretation of its use in the context of the article mentioned but if it is, that only serves to confirm the fact that problems may arise when the context does not make its use clear. For the purposes of this discussion, which is concerned with the more general implications of taking meaning to replace theme, it is enough to suppose this is what was intended here.

Thus, to take a very simple example: the plot of the play might be that a group of people are going on a voyage, the theme might be to do with the way people behave under stress or more precisely that people under stress tend to make rash decisions, so that to focus on the meaning would be to focus on this aspect of the play. However, many teachers (including Heathcote, judging by descriptions of other lessons) would not want to draw the attention of the class specifically to the theme in this way which might serve to destroy the drama by inhibiting the group's spontaneous approach to the work. It will be argued that to think in terms of the meaning of the drama as being equivalent to the theme may have misleading consequences but in order to make that point some further discussion of the notion of meaning is necessary.

35 M. Polanyi, Personal Knowledge (Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958), p. 57.

General accounts of meaning often refer to the fact that words have connotations. By this is meant that words have associations for people. These may vary considerably from person to person, or from group to group or there may be general tacit agreement on the connotations of a word. In the context of drama talk of the meaning of a play will tend to have connotations of what is significant, important, central. Above all, one would expect the educational significance of a piece of drama to attach to the meaning of the drama, that the increase in understanding must relate to the meaning. It is not necessary to treat these claims to any close scrutiny at this stage because the intention is just to point out the general connotations the word 'meaning' is likely to have and the sort of tacit assumptions which may influence approaches to the teaching of drama.

To return then to the assumption that the meaning is equivalent to the theme, the dangers can now be described. If the meaning is identified with the theme and the learning potential with the meaning then there will be a tendency to assume that the learning outcome will correspond to the theme. In the case of the example given, the learning area will be identified in precise terms: that people under stress make rash decisions. Here it will be apparent that there are echoes of the last chapter on learning where it was argued that to try to represent the learning outcome in terms of propositions is often to distort the nature of the drama. In the case of the example given it might be wrong to reduce the learning outcome to a form, 'people under

stress tend to make rash decisions', on the other hand it might be very important and useful for the teacher to think about the drama in those terms. (This point will be developed further at the end of the next section on aesthetic meaning). It is not a question of denying the use of the notion of theme or meaning in these cases but simply to avoid the assumption that the meaning of the drama is contained or defined in terms of its content alone, whether very simply in terms of plot or more sophisticatedly in terms of theme.

Not all uses of meaning in drama have been described but enough has been said at this stage to make a general comment. The dangers associated with uses of meaning can be summarised as follows. Various factors which can be said to constitute the meaning of the drama: form, the intention of the participants, content or theme can be taken to determine the meaning of the drama. Teachers of drama need a conceptual apparatus to talk about various aspects of the drama without being constrained from using 'meaning' in a variety of contexts. It is for this reason that the notion of aesthetic meaning is useful.

(iii) Aesthetic Meaning

Before looking at aesthetic meaning it will be useful to make some general comments on the application of aesthetics to drama in education. Osborne, in a survey of topics largely debated in aesthetic theory, gives some indication of the divergent points of

view and interest in the field.³⁶ This divergence has to do not just with a difference of opinion on the nature of aesthetic experience and judgement (which he suggests is the central core of aesthetics) but also because different forms of art prompt different but often analogous questions.

The choice of words here is important. If the questions presented by different art forms were totally separate, were not analogous, the business of aesthetics could be conducted in terms of particular art forms. But, of course, a large part of aesthetic thinking concerns itself with general questions about art, has to do with the general nature of aesthetic experience. Rader has suggested that much of the disagreement in the field is merely nominal:

"Terms such as 'imagination', 'form', 'meaning', and 'distance' indicate different facets of a rich and varied subject rather than mutually exclusive definitions."³⁷

In his own survey of the field he attempts to reconcile various doctrines which may appear contradictory and his motive for doing so is appealing:

"This attempt to resolve conflicts in theory seems to me peculiarly appropriate to aesthetics, for art itself is the great reconciler of those opposites in our practical life which ordinarily exclude each other."³⁸

36 H. Osborne (ed.), Aesthetics (Oxford University Press, 1972), see introduction, pp. 1-24.

37 M. Rader (ed.), A Modern Book of Aesthetics (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, U.S.A., 1935, revised fourth edition, 1973), p. 1. (The spelling "Esthetics" is used in the title).

38 *ibid.*, p. 19.

Perhaps the necessary note of caution is struck by Langer when she comments,

"When we talk about 'Art' with a capital 'A' - that is about any or all of the arts: painting, sculpture, architecture, the potter's and goldsmith's and other designers' arts, music, dance, poetry and prose fiction, drama and film - it is a constant temptation to say things about 'Art' in this general sense that are true only in one special domain, or to assume that what holds for one art must hold for another."³⁹

It is significant that in her own writing, although Langer is concerned to give a systematic, unified account of the nature of art, she is careful to relate her general theory to specific art forms. In fact she describes her theory as an attempt to find the unity in art by looking at the differences which divide the various art forms.⁴⁰ A similar conclusion about the dangers of making unwarranted generalisations about art could be drawn from Charlton's comments when he discusses formalist criteria of art and points out that the concentration on a notion of pure form by aestheticians like Whistler and Bell seems far more appropriate to music than, for example, to works of literature.⁴¹

In looking to aesthetics then for some application to drama in education, caution must be exercised. Account must be taken

39 S. Langer, Problems of Art (Charles Scribners Sons, N.Y., 1957), p. 13.

40 *ibid.*, p. 14. "It is in pursuing the differences among them that one arrives, finally, at a point where no more differences appear; then one has found, not postulated, their unity".

41 W. Charlton, Aesthetics (Hutchinson, 1970), p. 24.

of the nature of drama in education, for the indiscriminate application of some aesthetic theorising could distort the nature of the subject. Discussions about aesthetic experience, for example, are often concerned with response to art objects whereas much educational drama is not so much concerned with response to art but experience in creation, sometimes described as a different emphasis on 'process' or 'product'. The concern here is not necessarily to preserve the distinction between theatre and drama but to point out that the interest for the teacher is determined by the educational context. Thus in a theatrical experience he is likely to be interested in the experience of the pupils whether they are actors or audience. The concentration on response to art objects is understandable in aesthetics given that what is meant by art normally refers to actual art objects. This assumption, for example, underlies Hospers' comments on meaning:

"I suggest that it be defined somewhat as follows:
a work of art means to us whatever effects (not necessarily emotions) it evokes in us."⁴²

A definition of this kind is not helpful if applied directly to drama.

So far in this study reference has been made only in passing to the notion of drama as art. Until now attention has been directed more at the educational concepts involved in order to examine some of the problems involved in attaching concepts like

42 J. Hospers, "Meaning", in M. Weitz, Problems in Aesthetics (Macmillan Co., N.Y., 1959), p. 243.

aims, learning and teaching to drama. Thus it has been the intention to look at some of the problems raised by questions of the kind, 'what are the pupils learning in drama?' without using the claim that because drama is an art form such questions are not relevant. This tendency to take the concept 'art' as a reason for not defining closely the content of concepts like learning and teaching is understandable and must be taken seriously for art is generally conceived to be concerned with what is otherwise ineffable. In the same way, opposition to various claims that drama promotes learning which were identified elsewhere have to be considered. It will be argued that the concept of aesthetic meaning gives some insight into the claim that drama is art without contradicting the content of the earlier discussion on aims and learning.

The account of aesthetic meaning given by Reid is one which in its most simplified form would receive agreement from artists and critics.⁴³ It is the view which sees works of art as having unique, untranslatable, embodied meaning. It will be worth dwelling a little on an example given by him because it conveys more clearly what he means than would a summary of his argument. The view of meaning of art he proposes is easier to grasp in terms of the notion of poetic meaning. Reid gives as an example Macbeth's speech, "Tomorrow, and tomorrow and tomorrow" and says

43 L. Reid, Meaning in the Arts (Allen and Unwin, 1969). A useful summary of his theory can be found in "Education and Aesthetic Meaning", a shorter article by him in British Journal of Aesthetics (9,3, 1969, pp. 271-284).

that the thought that "life seems meaningful" has often been uttered but in these lines there is a "new incarnation".

"It is not simply that it says more than a short paraphrase can give, but that every bit of the quality of the sounding language is part of the felt meaning. Any good critic could show this. The long, dreary, repeated sounds of 'tomorrow ... creeps ...'; the sound of contempt and disgust in the contrast of the long and the sharp sounds in 'petty'; the compression of 'dusty death'; the passion of 'Out, out ...'; the despair of 'struts and frets', of 'idiot'; the frustration, by the word 'nothing'; the expectation of the long 'signifying' ... in all these, and throughout the passage, the 'sound' and the 'sense' are, aesthetically, completely inseparable."⁴⁴

I would want to add to these comments that because this is an extract from a play the import of these lines will also depend on what has come before both in terms of plot and language and in production of the actions and particular stresses of the actor. There is in these lines a culmination of the light/darkness imagery which has pervaded the play. Critical accounts of this speech often treat it as a poem thus neglecting to take into account the fact that its total import depends on its context within the play. To say that the speech has meaning by virtue of its unique combination of content and form is only accurate as long as the analysis of form is adequate. A similar point will

44 L. Reid, op. cit. (1969), p. 99.

Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow,
Creeps in this petty pace from day to day
To the last syllable of recorded time,
And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
The way to dusty death. Out, out, brief candle!
Life's but a walking shadow, a poor player
That struts and frets his hour upon the stage
And then is heard no more: it is a tale
Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

be made in relation to educational drama. The main point here, however, is that meaning qua aesthetic meaning cannot be reduced to the sum of its parts for the work of art embodies unique, new meaning.

Reid acknowledges the difficulties associated with this conception of meaning.

"The fact is familiar to all aesthetically sensitive people but the formulation of the concept is difficult, largely because the fact referred to is uniquely aesthetic and our ordinary language is made to deal with other, non-aesthetic matters."⁴⁵

One of the consequences of this analysis is the inseparability of aesthetic meaning from the form in which it is embodied.

A similar point about meaning is made by Coombes when he is talking about the way the language of a poet conveys unique meaning in contrast to other forms of writing,

"To alter his language would mean altering and impairing his thought; whereas in expository and informative writing (which, let us remember, forms the great bulk of all writing), the language may be altered considerably and still convey the same meaning. 'Meaning' in this sense is only part of the poet's expressiveness; his experience is not a matter of gathering ideas and facts at second-hand; it is one of sensuous, emotional and intellectual awareness of life."⁴⁶

It is clear from these comments that 'meaning' is being used in a distinct way and the ambiguity attached to the concept

45 L. Reid, "Education and Aesthetic Meaning", in British Journal of Aesthetics (9, 3, 1969), p. 273.

46 H. Coombes, Literature and Criticism (Chatto and Windus, 1953), p. 87.

has prompted some writers to avoid it when talking about art.

Hospers warns about the sort of problems involved,

"... it may not seem advisable at all to use the word 'meaning' in speaking of works of art. And I am quite ready to agree with this sentiment; the word 'meaning' when used in this context is vastly confusing."⁴⁷

He suggests that the source of confusion arises because of other conventional uses of meaning. Reid is not prepared to accept this type of objection and is insistent on using the term:

"'Meaning' is a word with a rich variety of content and should not be used in one logical context only. There are contexts in which aestheticians and art critics ought to use meaning; aesthetic meaning is one of the facts of life and if logicians do not yet understand this, they have, as the saying goes, 'something coming to them'."⁴⁸

Reid's view of aesthetic meaning has much in common with that of Langer, although she tends to prefer to use 'import'. For example, considerations of the kind quoted above prompt her to suggest that it is more appropriate to talk about what a poet has made rather than what he is saying because this second formulation tends to make us consider content alone.⁴⁹ It would be too much of a digression to consider Langer's theory in detail here but the objections Reid makes to her use of certain terms serves to emphasise his conception of aesthetic meaning. For example, his preference for the term 'embodiment' rather than 'expression' is to avoid the

47 J. Hospers, "Meaning", in M. Weitz, op. cit. (1959), p. 243.

48 L. Reid, Meaning in the Arts, op. cit. (1969), p. 68.

49 S. Langer, Feeling and Form (Routledge, 1953), p. 211.

view that feelings are expressed in art. A literal sense of expression might be when water is squeezed from a sponge; the water which comes out is the same water as was absorbed. In creating a work of art a new complex comes into being,

"... and in our aesthetic experience of it, we come to have new feelings, and new structures of feelings, which are not projections of the forms of life-feelings but new vital feelings themselves not just 'how vital and emotional and intellectual tensions feel ...' but new, fresh, vital tensions relevant and specific to the meaning specifically embodied in this thing here before us, nowhere else and never before."⁵⁰

The word 'expressive', Reid wants to maintain, has contra-aesthetic undertones because it directs our thoughts outwards rather than into the unique meaning embodied in creation.

He has similar reasons for not wanting to describe art as symbolic. What a symbol normally means, he suggests, is conceptually distinguishable from the symbol itself (a hearth symbolises security) which is not the case with an aesthetic symbol, "The perceptuum does not 'symbolize' or 'mean' something else, which is, aesthetically and in aesthetic experience distinct from itself: aesthetic meaning is embodied".⁵¹ It might seem odd that Reid defends the use of 'meaning' so vociferously (he objects to Langer 'kow-towing' to logicians by using 'import' instead) but objects to the use of 'symbol' and 'expression' because they have other uses outside aesthetics, but that is a minor point.

50 L. Reid, *Meaning in the Arts*, op. cit. (1969), p. 61.

51 *ibid.*, p. 198.

The concept of aesthetic meaning has only been given brief attention but the explication of the idea can continue in the context of drama. It is worth anticipating a possible objection at this stage. It is all very well using the sophisticated notion of aesthetic meaning to apply to poetry and in particular to a piece of Shakespeare verse, the language of which resonates with profound meaning but is it not far-fetched and something of a conceit to apply the same concept to an infant play on witches or a fourth year secondary school improvisation about a strike? The language of these plays can hardly be said to be dense with imagery and subtle nuances. This sort of objection is the kind of misapplication of aesthetic theory to drama identified earlier which does not take into account the nature of the subject itself. The constituents of the meaning of the drama have to be identified in their own terms as will be described.

It might be argued from the account of aesthetic meaning given so far that this, when the idea is applied to drama, is to deny attempts to formulate what the particular educational content of a drama experience might be. For the meaning of an art form is ultimately not explicable in terms other than by reference to itself as an integrated whole. Does the notion of aesthetic meaning admit the application of epistemological terms? Is the use of a notion like aesthetic meaning which seems so elusive not to further the entrenchment and polarisation between those who have faith in the arts as education and those who would see them as recreation or hobby or, even worse, as the pastime of an elite who can 'speak the language'?

Greger, in an article on aesthetic meaning, has comments which are relevant to these sorts of questions.⁵² She endorses the view of 'meaning embodiment' described here and goes on to identify an objection to that view which was made by Gregory.⁵³ One aspect of his criticism is that to talk of meaning-embodiment in this way is what amounts to an evasion of the problems associated with the concept of meaning and that talk of art does not warrant the application of epistemological terms:

"... If someone having had an aesthetic experience now claims to know something they never knew before, it is right and proper, if so inclined, to ask them what it is they now know. If they reply to the effect that it is quite unformable propositionally, it is unclear why they should in fact be credited with knowledge, even of a mysterious kind."⁵⁴

Gregory's objection hinges on the fact that if one cannot effectively capture linguistically the meaning of a work of art, it makes little sense to talk of knowledge in relation to art. Greger's response to his objection can be seen to take two forms: she first tackles his view directly and then proceeds to elucidate more clearly her concept of aesthetic meaning by examining it in relation to a Blake poem. She suggests that Gregory must either be working from within a positivist framework or else is himself

52 S. Greger, "Aesthetic Meaning", Proceedings of the Philosophy of Education Society (Supplementary Issue, Vol. vi, 2, 1972).

53 I. Gregory, Review of Meaning in the Arts, in Education for Teaching (Summer 1971), p. 78ff.

54 *ibid.*, p. 81.

glossing over the problems which the concept of aesthetic meaning intends to solve. In the former case, if he is evoking the verification principle that truths are either analytic or verifiable empirically then he is forced to reduce moral and religious statements to the same emotivist status. Greger, justifiably, does not go further along that line of argument - presumably she assumes that to identify his stand as logical positivist is enough to defeat it. On the other hand, if, in his demands for the propositional, he is simply seeking statements taking an overt subject-predicate form then she suggests he is not necessarily seeking the sort of clarification he may think he is seeking.

"Would he, for example, accept Keats' exclamation, 'Beauty is truth, truth beauty' as propositional, simply on the basis of its apparent propositional form and therefore having a just claim to knowledge?"⁵⁵

The point Greger is making here can be applied to drama in an interesting way. Although it was suggested in an earlier chapter that to try to define the learning propositionally is to misinterpret the nature of the subject, there are occasions when the teacher and observers can identify what might be described as the 'colour' of the experience in language which takes a propositional form.⁵⁶

When Greger examines a poem in detail she demonstrates that although the total import of the poem finally eludes discursive

55 S. Greger, op. cit. (1972), p. 142.

56 As an example, in a play about a tribe the pupils (six year old white Californians) learn, "that Africans are like us in many ways". G. Bolton, op. cit. (1979), p. 41.

analysis this does not mean that the work cannot be analysed, in her words "unpacked discursively". She contrasts the sort of thinking applicable to Mathematics and the Sciences which conform to certain laws of logic (e.g. ambiguity or multiple meanings serve to invalidate the logic) to the sort of thinking applicable to the arts which has its own order, discipline and rationale. A poem cannot be discussed in terms of strict inductive or deductive logic: it will contain conflicting ideas, contradictions and paradoxes which open up the willing reader's responsiveness.

"Any preconceived ideas and expectations of simple meaning are revealed as inadequate in the face of these conflicting meanings and the reader is disturbed into experiencing at a deeper level than is probably normal for him in the course of practical, everyday life."⁵⁷

Thus the notion of 'levels of meaning' and concepts like connotation and significance (which it will be remembered Best was so concerned to distinguish from meaning) will be vital to aesthetic meaning.

This line of argument is continued in another article, "Presentational Theories Need Unpacking". Although she is basically in sympathy with various forms of presentational theories of art⁵⁸, she takes issue with the tendency to claim that because

57 S. Greger, op. cit. (1972), p. 148.

58 "Broadly, presentational approaches make some such claim as this: the artist, as a feeling, thinking human being, finds, it is said, a way of embodying his own feelings and thoughts within the concrete form of a poem, a painting or a prelude, so projecting it that it can be perceived, and in some sense, known, by other feeling-thinking human beings", S. Greger, "Presentational Theories Need Unpacking", The British Journal of Aesthetics (9, 2, 1969), p. 157.

'meaning' cannot be elucidated, a work of art defies analysis or precludes evaluation.

"Art forms come across to us 'whole', we feel; they are to be responded to and apprehended as a whole, and we ought to play safe by keeping the whole affair as simple as that. Then it becomes the easiest thing in the world to stand in rapt contemplation murmuring the 'How true!'s and 'How significant!'s of the pseudo-aesthete; so perhaps the pursuit of the ineffable is not the easiest way after all."⁵⁹

What is required she suggests, is careful analysis of the way the art form's structures work and analysis of the many differential ways in which the elements of an art form can 'mean' without losing the notion of 'meaning embodiment'.⁶⁰

The article goes on to give a detailed explanation of this view which in its most simplified form is conveyed by her use of the term 'unpacking' and can be applied usefully to the drama process. There are difficulties in applying aesthetic theories to drama. Few drama exponents would now want to see their work as being equivalent to a simple representation of reality but it is also difficult to see how presentational theories like that of Langer can apply. The reason is that so much of the work, the planning and execution of the play and the accompanying educational thinking takes place in discursive language. Thus it is difficult to see how the notion of aesthetic meaning as employed in presentational theories can apply. Adapting Greger's terms, however, what

59 S. Greger, op. cit. (1969), p. 160.

60 *ibid.*, p. 160.

is going on in a drama lesson can be described as a process of 'packing': in a process of selection and manipulation to achieve artistic form, levels of meaning will be achieved, objects will accrue symbolic meaning. At the same time the specific teacher objective of expanding insight and awareness can be an integral part of the process without reducing the meaning of the drama. It is not necessary to expand on the process of 'packing' in more practical detail here for examples of what I have in mind can be found in the writings of various drama exponents; the point here is rather to relate the process to a wider aesthetic theory.⁶¹

The drama teacher can be described as integrating the various ingredients which contribute to the meaning into a unity, an artistic whole. The word 'integration' provides another useful concept for the drama teacher in order to expand the notion of aesthetic meaning. Since the notion of 'play for them (the pupils) and play for us (the teacher)' was coined, it has been widely quoted because it conveys very well the idea that a play should have a dimension which goes beyond mere development of the plot (the most likely approach the pupils will take).⁶² Thus a play about hijacking may in the teacher's terms be a play about loyalty. It is important, however, to point out how this way of thinking about a lesson may have misleading consequences. The educational

61 This application of the notion of packing will also be explored in Chapter Six.

62 G. Gillham, Condercum School Report for Newcastle L.E.A., unpublished. Reference to the 'play for them', 'play for us' distinction is made by Bolton, op. cit. (1979), p. 51.

potential of the drama will reside in the teacher's conception, 'the play for us'. But in that case the way is open for the teacher to place an interpretation on the pupils' activity which is no more than self-deception - he may choose to view a play about hijacking which is, in fact, no more than a piece of frivolous fun, as being about loyalty.

Of course, the answer to this criticism is that the teacher's conception of the play must influence the decision he makes as teacher, the questions he asks, the way he chooses to deepen the work and extend the thinking of the pupils. In that case does not the teacher's play become the pupils' play or is there still a sense in which there is a 'play for them' and a 'play for us'? I think that most teachers would want to answer 'yes' to this last question but that still leaves the theoretical problem.

A way out of this dilemma is to evoke Polanyi's concept of integration which has a particular technical use in his writing. He applies his distinction between subsidiary and focal awareness (which was discussed earlier) to the meaning of a poem. The reader is subsidiarily aware of its rhythm, its sounds, grammatical construction and word connotations and these can be identified and examined separately. The meaning of the poem arises when attention is focused on the poem itself instead of upon its parts. Thus the artistic meaning is appreciated through a process of tacit integration.

"Such integration cannot be replaced by any explicit mechanical procedure. In the first place, even though one can paraphrase the cognitive content of an integ-

ration, the sensory quality which conveys this content cannot be made explicit. It can only be lived, can only be dwelt in."⁶³

In the drama then the 'play for the teacher' can be said to be integrated into the aesthetic meaning of the drama by the child but not necessarily at the same fully conscious level of perception with which the teacher may view aspects of the drama. In other words, the 'two plays' description of the drama lesson is useful provided it is not seen as identifying two meanings but rather two aspects of the integrated aesthetic meaning of the drama which is experienced in the process of the drama.

It may be remembered that an examination of what various writers have written on the structure of consciousness was important in the paper on learning where it was argued that a simple account of intentional learning was not adequate for drama. In the same way the idea of integration makes the concept of aesthetic meaning more easily applicable to drama as an educative process. This concept of integration will also be important in the discussion of form in drama.

(iv) Form

The discussion of aesthetic meaning will be extended in this section on form particularly with a view to distinguishing different approaches to drama which can be identified by analysing

63 M. Polanyi and H. Porsch, op. cit. (1975), p. 41.

the implicit view taken of form. It would be tempting to describe a significant development in approaches to the subject in terms of a movement from 'self-expression' or 'growth' approaches (described in detail in Chapter Three on Aims) to a greater emphasis on structure, techniques or form. It is a view which would accord with the generally accepted idea that there is currently more emphasis on the role of the teacher within the drama. The trouble with this view is not that it is wrong but that it gives an altogether too simple picture; it is often the case that statements which are true can be more misleading than those which are clearly false. Firstly, the notion of form and the relationship of form to meaning is more complex than a statement of this kind suggests. Secondly, it tends to give a misleading picture of the relationship between form and teaching. Both these claims will be explored in this section.

In writing about drama, 'form' is often taken to refer to 'convention', 'technique', 'shape of the action' or 'theatre craft' and the way these concepts tend to overlap presents difficulties. The problem with applying the notion of form to art in general is that it can have a relatively straightforward meaning when it refers to shape or structure in a concrete way but that it has a more elusive, abstract meaning which is not so much an alternative but a wider conception. It is not a question of an either/or distinction: form is not mere shape but shape is likely to be part of what is meant by form. The form of a particular poem cannot be reduced to a simple list of characteristics like

rhyme, rhythm, length of stanza and so on but these aspects of the work will be included in the idea of its form. In drama reference to form at the crudest level might be to a simple notion of external structure, e.g. how the participants are physically organised, but it can also include reference to notions like a 'sense of time' which as will be seen attempts to convey the particular nature of the art form.

This last distinction highlights another problem with the concept of form. It can refer to the general characteristics of the art form or it can refer to the particular and importantly unique aspects of a particular art object or aesthetic experience. These distinctions need to be borne in mind: discussions at a general level are useful but particular art objects will display their own unique form.

This point is made by Langer in her discussion of form in Problems of Art where she identifies the wide-ranging aspect of the concept. The notion of form she wants to employ is more complex than a naive idea of material shape; she rather defines form as,

"... structure, articulation, a whole resulting from the relation of mutually dependent factors, or, more precisely the way that whole is put together."⁶⁴

An important implication of this view is that artistic forms cannot be abstracted from the works that exhibit them,

64 S. Langer, op. cit. (1957), p. 16.

"We may abstract a shape from an object that has this shape, by disregarding colour, weight and texture, even size; but to the total effect that is an artistic form, the colour matters, the thickness of lines matters and the appearance of texture and weight."⁶⁵

There is a danger of confusion here because there is a sense in which various formal aspects of a work of art can be identified and discussed. The point, however, of Langer's comments seems to be more that in aesthetic experience there is no distinction between what might be called content, matter, subject or substance on the one hand and form or treatment on the other. This view is echoed by the critic Bradley who objects to tendencies to think that in a poem there are two factors, a substance and a form which can be conceived distinctly in poetic experience. He is careful to distinguish between the analysing and criticising of a poem and the experiencing of it. In the latter case it is not a question of enjoying "as one thing a certain meaning or substance and as another thing certain articulate sounds".⁶⁶ He compares the response to a poem to the response to a smile which does not apprehend separately the lines in the face which express a feeling and the feeling that the lines express,

"Just as there the lines and their meaning are to you one thing, not two, so in poetry the meaning and sounds are one: there is, if I may put it so, a resonant meaning, or a meaning resonance."⁶⁷

65 S. Langer, op. cit. (1957), p. 25.

66 A. Bradley, "Poetry for Poetry's Sake", from Oxford Lectures on Poetry (1909), reprinted in M. Rader, op. cit. (1935), p. 243.

67 *ibid.*, p. 243.

Thus form is inextricably related to aesthetic meaning, a point made in the previous section.

Having identified what might be described as a fuller description of form which goes further than a conception of mere external shape or structure (which is discussed in detail in O'Neill's study of form in educational drama)⁶⁸, it is possible to examine more closely the problems associated with describing the development of educational drama as involving more stress on structure. The problems with this view is that it could be taken to mean simply an emphasis on teacher directed tasks and exercises or predetermined sequences in plays to distinguish contemporary from earlier 'free expression' approaches. In fact, however, the most recent writers on drama have an implicit view of form which sees its relationship to the drama in a more organic way than this interpretation would suggest.

It is difficult to find language which does not leave the way open for the sort of misinterpretation described above. This might explain why teachers of drama can often share the same language and appear to be in agreement but in fact have a different conception of their subject. Consider the following:

"It is precisely this inability on the part of the teachers to structure their work which is likely to lead to drama that remains at a level of superficiality."⁶⁹

68 C. O'Neill, "Drama and the Web of Form", (M.A.(Ed.) dissertation, University of Durham, 1978).

69 *ibid.*, p. 19.

This quotation out of context could be taken to demand the imposition of rigid teacher directed tasks but it is, in fact, taken from O'Neill's study of form in educational drama which clearly reveals the importance of a notion of form which is more than just external shape or pattern imposed by the teacher. The elements which are isolated for discussion are 'time', 'tension' and 'rhythm' and what is interesting about these concepts and the way they are discussed is that they are necessarily part of the human expression of the drama for it is a sense of time, tension, rhythm on the part of the participants which is important.

The identification of the concept time, for example, is referring to more than the fact that drama takes place over time as opposed to an art form like painting. More important is the sense of time, the feeling that present actions will have a sense of their origins and future consequences. This can be seen to be an element which distinguishes some forms of dramatic playing in which although there is obviously a linear time sequence there is little sense of the future in the activity: cowboys are shot with little attention to the consequences.

"It is the movement towards the future, in terms of the consequences of past actions, rather than a pre-occupation with 'what happens next' which gives educational drama its depth and purpose."⁷⁰

70 C. O'Neill, op. cit. (1978), p. 53.

Bolton has shown that the drama teacher can use elements of theatre form like tension, focus, contrast and symbolisation but he makes the all-important distinction that whereas the playwright is building tension for the audience, the teacher builds tension for the children as participants.⁷¹ The difference is important for in the first case the formal elements can work for the audience without necessarily having a similar effect on the actors (although, as suggested elsewhere, this would give a crude view of acting), whereas in the drama the formal elements do not merely give shape to the drama but serve to enhance the feeling of the participants.

For the purpose of this study it will not be necessary to go into a detailed discussion of elements of form identified by exponents of drama which would be to duplicate work undertaken elsewhere.⁷² The important point is to make the distinction which accurately represents the way the subject has developed. It has been argued that to see the development in approaches to drama from 'self-expression' to 'structure' is true as far as it goes but that description of the change in emphasis is in danger of excluding recognition of the fact that the form must be seen as an integral part of the human expression within the drama. If this idea is related to the notion of aesthetic meaning it is

71 G. Bolton, "Theatre Form in Drama Teaching", in K. Robinson (ed.), Exploring Theatre and Education (Heinemann, 1980), pp. 71-87.

72 C. O'Neill, op. cit. (1978).

to say that the meaning of the drama is not to be identified simply in terms of content and form except in as much as the form is seen as an integral part of the consciousness of the participants within the drama. This idea will be expanded later.

It is time to examine the second question which was identified at the start of this section, which was to do with the relationship between form and teaching. This discussion must be seen as complementing that undertaken above for the view of the relationship between form and teaching will vary according to how form is conceived. To start with, however, the discussion can be undertaken with a fairly simple notion of form as technique for even with that simplified version an account of what is involved in teaching form is more complex than is often thought. There is another reason for undertaking the discussion in that way. It was suggested above that the notion of technique must be seen as part, though not all, of what is involved in form. Although some approaches to the subject can be seen as taking an over-simplified conception of form, it may be equally true to suggest that more sophisticated discussions of the concept in drama do not take into account problems associated with more basic questions.⁷³

73 O'Neill's analysis which concentrates on time, tension and rhythm does not deal with the problem of when the teacher should direct the actions of the pupils.

Before looking at technique in the context of drama it will be useful to consider the problem in a wider educational context. In order to do so I propose to consider in some detail an article by Best in which he contrasts what he sees as "... on the one hand, freedom of expression, to allow unrestricted individual development, and on the other hand, the teaching of techniques".⁷⁴ He is mainly concerned in his article to relate the mistaken view that the teaching of techniques inhibits freedom to what he sees as its origin, a misconception about the nature of individual personality and its relationship to society at large. I am less concerned, however, with his explanation for what he sees as the mistaken neglect of techniques but rather to suggest that his analysis presents an oversimplified view of what teaching techniques must involve.

His basic point is the familiar one that advocates of an extreme free-expression approach failed to realise that without techniques, expression of any kind is severely limited and he recommends that teachers should realise the need to teach techniques. These comments are more by way of a preliminary to his main concern in the article but they betray the common misconception about the teaching of techniques which I want to identify.

74 D. Best, "Free Expression or the Teaching of Techniques", British Journal of Educational Studies (Vol. xxvii, No. 3, October 1979), p. 210.

The nature of that misconception can be seen by considering the comments Best makes on the teaching of English. He says:

"A person with an inadequate grasp of the techniques of reading, spelling, grammar, vocabulary suffers a consequent limitation of individual freedom, and capacity for free expression."⁷⁵

Now I do not wish to quarrel with this statement. What I would suggest, however, is that, contrary to what the author thinks, and this is the main point, there is little evidence to suggest that many people would question this claim. The comment in the context in which it is made contains an oversimplification of the problem. The debate on techniques can be described not so much as a dispute about their importance which is generally recognised, rather it is a question of establishing how best they are taught, or to pose the question in conceptual rather than methodological terms, "what does it mean to 'teach techniques?'"

The implication in this article is that there is a simple progression from the acquisition of techniques to the subsequent use of those techniques and on the face of it this seems obvious: one cannot read and enjoy a book without learning the technique of reading. The problem for the teacher, however, is more subtle, for if the focus in the teaching process is on the mechanical task of pronouncing words correctly rather than on the meaning of a significant text, there may be a case for saying

75 D. Best, op. cit. (1979), p. 211.

that this is likely to inhibit progress; the teaching of reading may have as much to do with motivation as technique. There is a limited sense in which 'techniques of reading' can be isolated from 'reading' but, as the Bullock Report pointed out, the problem is one of finding the correct balance,

"... there is no one method, medium, approach, device, or philosophy that holds the key to the process of learning to read ... Some would put so much emphasis on the 'mechanics' of reading that certain children would be handicapped rather than helped. Others advocate so keenly the virtues of mature reading from the beginning that they are in danger of leaving it too much to trust that the skills will be acquired on the way."⁷⁶

The quotation above from Best's article also refers to the teaching of grammar. Teachers of English largely stopped placing emphasis on grammar because of advice from linguists that pupils had a tacit awareness of the rules of grammar and to make these explicit was not only unnecessary but possibly harmful.⁷⁷ Teachers of English could have been described as teaching techniques of grammar in an organic way as part of language use rather than in an explicit manner.

The problem in part relates to an analysis of the concept teaching which was discussed in Chapter Four. Teaching has to be seen as a more subtle process than a basic transmission model will admit for the teaching of techniques is not necessarily to

76 H.M.S.O., A Language For Life (London, H.M.S.O., 1975), p. 77.

77 *ibid.*, p. 169ff.

be seen as a process of drawing conscious attention to the skills in question.⁷⁸ Just because there is a logical sequence involved from 'techniques' to 'ability to use techniques', there does not necessarily have to be a temporal sequence in the teaching.

Hamlyn makes a similar point when he is discussing the acquisition of knowledge in general,

"... someone could not come to knowledge of X, if this is to be learning, without other knowledge. But this other knowledge does not need to have been acquired previously in time. The priority that is necessary is a logical priority only."⁷⁹

A simple means/end model is not appropriate. It is clear that Best is thinking in these terms when he comments that grammar, "should be regarded as a means to the end of giving the child the possibility of greater freedom of expression".⁸⁰ The complexity of the relationship between means and ends has been described elsewhere in Chapter Three, where attention was drawn to Sockett's discussion of the matter. Very often in the teaching of techniques the relationship can be said in his terms to be 'logically constitutive' when the means are said to be part of the end.⁸¹

78 The relationship between teaching and intention as discussed in Chapter Four is also important here.

79 D.W. Hamlyn, *Human Learning*, in R.S. Peters (ed.), The Philosophy of Education (O.U.P., 1973), p. 187.

80 D. Best, *op. cit.* (1979), p. 212.

81 H. Sockett, "Curriculum Planning: Taking a Means to an End", in R.S. Peters (ed.), *op. cit.* (1973), p. 156.

To return then to the discussion of drama, it can be expected that the relationship of form to teaching is likely to be fairly complex. Pupils may display an ability to handle the medium of drama, a variety of techniques which they did not possess at the start of a course - an ability to sustain a variety of roles, an ability to create a difficult role, an acute sense of space, an ability to advance the drama, skill in language, movement, gesture - but it does not mean these are necessarily isolated and taught in a conscious, overt way. Gesture, for example, would traditionally have been considered an acting skill to be isolated and practised, whereas any gestures the pupils make now tend to be seen as emerging naturally from the context of the drama.

Does that mean then that skills and techniques are always a tacit part of the drama process with the teacher not drawing attention to the external action at all? There are writers on the subject who seem to imply this. In a discussion about different levels of perception in drama, Robinson draws attention to Polanyi's distinction between focal and subsidiary awareness which was mentioned earlier.

"I've seen many lessons where the focus of the group's attention is on the external actions of the play and they are only aware subsidiarily that it may mean something."⁸²

The actual context of this remark makes it ambiguous but I take it to mean that the focus of the participants should not be on

82 K. Robinson (ed.), op. cit. (1980), p. 29.

the external action. This is an interpretation which accords with Heathcote's comment in the same article,

"They must focus on the meaning of the drama and then the subsidiary actions will come right and true."⁸³

Attention has already been drawn to the problems associated with the notion of meaning here but if content is substituted we have a compelling account of the way form relates to teaching: teacher concentrates on content and the form is taught subsidiarily. This formula is compelling because it accords with the change of emphasis in drama that pupils are not required to 'demonstrate' feeling but to experience 'real feeling', implying that the external action does not matter as long as the feeling is right.

There is a theoretical problem here because this sort of view implicitly makes an artificial distinction between 'internal' and 'external' action. This point was mentioned in another connection in Chapter Four. It is enough to say here that the account given above is simply not an adequate description of the way teachers, including Heathcote, actually operate for very often they do find it necessary to focus on external action. Bolton, the main advocate of the importance of internal action in drama, takes care to stress the importance of concrete events and actions. There is a problem here of finding a theoretical explanation which reflects accurately the practice, for experienced teachers intuitively know that it might be right at times

83 K. Robinson (ed.), op. cit. (1980), p. 29.

to instruct a group to mime accurately but also that in many cases it would be clearly wrong.

"There are times when even the most careful miming is not enough; at others precision of action does not matter."⁸⁴

Before exploring this question further it will be useful to make an interesting parallel, by way of an aside, with earlier approaches to drama. Slade, contrary to what is often thought, saw child drama as possessing form, but he saw it as a natural form.

"Between the years of seven and twelve we find extreme spiritual beauties and intense sensitivity, at times equalling in skill the talents of supreme artists - the adventures, attempts and creation have their forms of skill (many of them now conscious) and all their beauty. And yet they have what Clive Bell has called 'significant form' - and it has been suggested that that which has significant form is Art."⁸⁵

To describe contemporary exponents as leaving the form to take care of itself as always a tacit part of the process would be to ally them with the sort of view of form taken by Slade. The simple account that form is always subsidiary is not satisfactory.

The problem then is more one of deciding when it is right for the teacher to concentrate on specific details of the actions of the participants. This problem relates to the question of

84 G. Bolton, "Drama as Concrete Action", London Drama (Vol. 6, No. 4, Spring 1981), p. 16.

85 P. Slade, Child Drama (University of London Press, 1954), p. 68.

feeling and is discussed by writers on drama in those terms. However, it is worthwhile exploring Polanyi's comments on the structure of consciousness in more detail. Although it was partly helpful for Robinson to draw attention to the distinction between focal and subsidiary awareness, without including the notion of tacit integration the reference is potentially misleading. Polanyi is careful to distinguish subsidiary and focal awareness from any similarity with conscious and unconscious awareness. Subsidiary awareness he describes as a 'from-awareness' and by this he means that subsidiaries function in such a way that they bear on the particular focus of consciousness. The concepts are also linked by him to meaning,

"The subsidiaries of from-to knowing bear on a focal target, and whatever a thing bears on may be called its meaning. Thus the focal target on which they bear is the meaning of the subsidiaries."⁸⁶

It is not then just a question of switching awareness from 'A' to 'B' for if 'A' is the subsidiary it has a bearing on 'B', it is part of 'B''s meaning.

It is not then a simple matter of the teacher ignoring the actions and practicalities of the drama, leaving them to take care of themselves. Because they bear as subsidiaries on the meaning of the drama the teacher can focus on the action to improve the quality of the drama; he will not, in other words,

86 M. Polanyi and H. Porsch, op. cit. (1975), p. 35.

focus on those actions which will destroy the pupils' "sense of the context".⁸⁷ Thus it might be quite wrong to focus on the accurate miming of opening and closing a door in one context but not in another. To ask a group of slaves in a drama to walk as if they are tired and weary might be to destroy the aesthetic meaning because this action might remain the focus, but to ask them to line up with bowl and spoon for food might be to improve the quality of the drama because the action is readily integrated as part of the aesthetic meaning of the drama. There are no ready-made rules to guide the teacher's decisions for it is the context of the lesson which determines those decisions. This is one reason presumably why contemporary exponents of the subject find it necessary to teach demonstration lessons and to give detailed accounts of lessons in their writing rather than prescribe pre-determined formulae.

It is possible then to relate the two discussions of 'form' and 'teaching form'. If an account of form is given which identifies those aspects of the concept which are more clearly related to the feeling of the participants (e.g. sense of tension and time) it is easier to see the form emerging from the total context of the drama. The same is true of form however, when it is taken to refer to the 'external' action. The notion of 'teaching form' with the qualifications identified can be seen

87 This phrase is used by Polanyi, *op. cit.* (1958), p. 56.

to have importance in contemporary approaches to the teaching of drama and must be included in the analysis of teaching in drama given in Chapter Three. The form of the drama must be seen to be inextricably related to the aesthetic meaning of the drama and hence to any change of insight which may accrue as a result of the drama.

(v) Meaning and Intention

The notion of aesthetic meaning is important for teachers of drama because it provides a conceptual 'peg' on which can be hung the various factors which constitute the meaning of the drama, thus avoiding the mistake of identifying any one of those factors with the meaning of the drama. These factors are actually integrated in the enactment of the drama in the consciousness of the participants. The importance of the subjective conscious state of the participants as a factor in recent writing on drama has been identified both in this chapter and elsewhere in Chapter Four on learning. It will be the purpose of this section to explore the validity and value of describing the consciousness of the participants as part of the aesthetic meaning of the drama.

Before examining this question it will be necessary to make some further comment on the notion of 'subjective consciousness'. In one sense to see consciousness as important is unavoidable because the drama takes place by virtue of the fact that conscious human beings are actively engaged in dramatic activity. However, the tendency of recent drama exponents has been to look beyond

the mere external form of behaviour in the teaching process to emphasise the importance of engaging the consciousness of the participants within the drama. In crude terms it is less a question of the teacher directing the class to walk like a king, bow like a king, give orders like a king but to engage the pupils in 'kingship' at a deeper level. The description here has been left vague because it will be part of the aim of this section to explore what this notion means more fully. The language of writers on drama conveys what I have in mind: reference is made to the 'quality of the children's belief', to a 'sense of significance' while terms like 'commitment' and 'depth' are used.

It should be said that drama exponents tend to use these terms in relation to the quality of feeling in the drama and they will be discussed in that context in the next chapter. As with the section on form, this present discussion has to be seen to be closely related to the whole question of feeling but it will be argued that there is a value in describing the process of deepening the drama as an engagement of the consciousness of the participants, particularly in terms of this analysis of meaning.

There are a number of ways of arguing that the inclusion of reference to the consciousness of the participants as part of the aesthetic meaning of the drama is justified. Because the art form embodies unique meaning sui generis it could be a matter of merely stipulating that in educational drama the meaning of the drama exists by virtue of the actual human expression which takes place. This is because of its unique nature as an art form, that

the participants are creating and experiencing rather than responding to an art object or rather than embodying meaning in a form which is to invite response from others. Secondly, it could be pointed out that meaning of art normally makes reference to the fusion of content and form. In the previous section the importance of relating form to human expression was identified and the route to including consciousness in aesthetic meaning may lie in that direction. The third approach might lie in placing more stress on the educational side. The consciousness of the participants could be said to be important in terms of any learning which is likely to take place so that it is right that the meaning of the drama should make reference to the conscious state of the participants.

There is value in these sorts of arguments but they do not relate this view of meaning to a wider background of philosophical thinking, particularly in aesthetics. For example, although it has been argued that the unique nature of drama has to be taken into account in any discussion of its aesthetic content, to make stipulations about its aesthetic nature without any reference to art in general is likely to do little to illuminate questions about what it means to view drama as art.

In order to examine the relationship between consciousness and meaning, reference will be made to the notion of intention. In a previous chapter on learning, the concept of intention was employed in its more normal use of 'deliberate purpose'. In this discussion intention will be used in a wider sense which needs to

be explained. Phenomenological writers have demonstrated the general relationship between meaning and consciousness by stressing the importance of intention.⁸⁸ The idea of the "intentionality of consciousness" refers to the fact that an act of consciousness whether it be perceiving, judging, imagining, is essentially directed towards an object.⁸⁹ Moreover, the act of consciousness can be distinguished from the object of consciousness so that there is an element of 'free play' around the latter:

"... the conscious being can, as it were, approach his object from various angles, can contemplate it, question it and describe it in a number of different ways."⁹⁰

Thus consciousness is seen as "active" as "meaning-bestowing".⁹¹

This is no more than the briefest summary of a complex area which has been oversimplified here but by couching subsequent discussion in terms of drama, the significance of these observations will be apparent. Drama exists by virtue of the imaginative act of consciousness of the participants. Participants in the

88 A useful article which discusses the relevance of this area of study to education is N. Bolton, "Phenomenology and Education", British Journal of Educational Studies (Vol. xxvii, No. 3, October 1979).

89 See, E. Pivcevic, Husserl and Phenomenology (Hutchinson, 1970). In particular Chapter 4: "Intentionality".

90 J.P. Sartre, The Psychology of Imagination (Methuen, 1972). Introduction by M. Warnock, p. x. (Published in France in 1940).

91 B. Curtis and W. Mays, Phenomenology and Education (Methuen, 1978), p. xiii.

drama can imagine themselves or another person as somebody else, can imagine an absent or totally non-existent object or can imagine something as different than it actually is. The notion of free play around the object of consciousness recognises the fact that the act of imaginative consciousness which constitutes the imaginary is not an all or nothing affair. It makes sense in other words to talk of different qualities of the imaginative act. Thus the consciousness of the participants can be engaged to affect the quality of the imaginative act and it is in this sense that it is reasonable to talk about quality of meaning for it is in the unreal that the drama takes on its real meaning.

It will be necessary to dwell on the description of drama as unreal. In one way this statement may appear to be a banal and obvious truth but I want to suggest that it conveys an essential aspect of drama as art which is not always recognised. The concern to seek depth and commitment in drama has been interpreted by some teachers as being a recognition that the purpose of drama is to approach the real as far as possible - the lesson is seen as a search for the real. This sort of thinking is likely to affect the teacher's whole approach not only in attempting to represent reality as closely as possible but more commonly to evoke what is considered real (meaning here what would have been in the real situation) emotional response. An example of what I have in mind is any tendency towards 'conning' when the teacher uses devices to beguile the pupils into thinking

that what is happening is real.⁹² Also, when the teacher uses an authority role to bully and discipline the pupils in role within the drama, this may not be drama of the deepest quality, although it will look real, because it will be real.

Another example can be found in Learning Through Theatre in which an entire theatre programme was conducted without the children's knowledge that this was drama,

"Throughout the morning or afternoon, the children have not been aware that a theatrical event is taking place. If you were to ask them whether they had enjoyed the play or liked the actors, they would probably look blank. For them, the adventure they have just been involved in is a reality ..."⁹³

Some people might be concerned with the morality of actual deceptions within a drama process but although I have sympathy with that view it is not my main concern here. What I am more interested in is the fact that this sort of practice removes an essential aspect of drama as art.

This conception of drama as 'aiming to approach the real' influences the sort of educational objectives which are attributed to the subject, for the tendency is to see the drama as providing an alternative to the equivalent real experience. It is as if the drama acts as second best to the actual experience it represents. In this case the teacher objectives are not seen in the terms described in Chapter Four on Learning, but rather the aim

92 See, G. Bolton, "Emotion and Meaning in Creative Drama", (Mimeo, University of Durham, 1975).

93 T. Jackson, Learning Through Theatre (Manchester University Press, 1980), p. 80.

is to provide the closest equivalent to the real experience which is being imitated. There will tend to be emphasis on social drama leaving little room for the use of fantasy and myth.⁹⁴

The levels of depth in drama do not operate on a continuum with reality at one end as the ultimate objective - the drama operates on a separate plane of the unreal. The drama will obviously draw on subject matter drawn from life and will necessarily make reference to the real world but that is a different matter from accurately representing the real world. There is another, more difficult problem, however, which is that drama will have its basis in the real in as much as the participants will have real identities and relationships which will feed into the drama. Writers on drama have pointed this out,

"The members of a group do not forget who they are and how they normally relate to each other because they are asked to take on a role."⁹⁵

In other words, the natural leader of the class may well turn out to be the leader of an expedition. The teacher needs to take into account the social reality of the group relationships in building the drama but there is an argument for saying that the better the aesthetic quality of the drama, the less important the group relationships will be.⁹⁶

94 I do not, of course, wish to imply that social drama is necessarily viewed in this way.

95 K. Robinson (ed.), op. cit. (1980), p. 167.

96 The drama is operating on a separate plane of unreality so the actual reality will become less significant.

The drama operates on a separate plane of the unreal and it is within the unreal that the teacher can act to engage the participants more deeply in the drama. It would be too much of a diversion from the main theoretical discussion to list methods used by drama teachers but it is worth mentioning one fairly common device. Discussion before a lesson can be seen as being more than a simple process of planning what is to happen in the drama but may be a process of gradually increasing the commitment of the pupils; they will often recall past experiences which will be brought to bear by a process of tacit integration to the quality of the imaginative act as they create the drama. The lesson can be viewed as a gradual process of engaging the consciousness of the pupils and, to recall a term used before, a process of 'packing' to create the aesthetic meaning of the drama.

Devices of this kind are not attempts to make the drama real - although it is often convenient to describe it as 'real', a source of confusion. The drama exists as an "intentional act of an imaginative consciousness"⁹⁷ and it will be argued that this essential aspect of drama has important consequences for the concept of drama as aesthetic education.

It is in this sense then that actions and expressions in drama can be said to be given meaning by virtue of the intention of the participants but in order to make the connection between

97 J.P. Sartre, op. cit. (1972), p. 219.

intention and aesthetic meaning it will be worth looking at the more general relation between intention and art. Normally aesthetic experience involves the creation of an art object by an artist and a subsequent response by the percipient. It will be useful therefore to consider the notion of intention from the point of view of both artist and percipient.

Discussion of the relevance of intention to art tends to centre on the so-called intentional fallacy, a term used by Wimsatt and Breardsley to suggest that "the design or intention of the author is neither available nor desirable as a standard for judging the success of a work of literary art".⁹⁸ In his discussion of the relevance of intention to response to a work of art, Redpath poses the problem in the context of the meaning of a poem as follows: "Is the meaning of a poem, the meaning the poet intended it to have?"⁹⁹ It is clear that the poet's intention cannot be viewed as a universal criterion of the meaning for it is important to acknowledge that there may be more in a poem than the author was aware. On the other hand, he does not want to go along with writers who want to remove all reference to an author's intention when evaluating or interpreting a poem. The probable intention of the poet, he suggests, does at least

98 W.K. Wimsatt and M.C. Breardsley, "The Intentional Fallacy", from The Verbal Icon (University of Kentucky Press, 1954), reprinted in M. Weitz, op. cit. (1959), p. 275.

99 T. Redpath, "Some Problems of Modern Aesthetics", in C.A. Mace (ed.), op. cit. (1957), p. 361.

sometimes afford a criterion by which to judge whether a certain meaning attributed to a poem is correct or not. It is a problem then of finding the right balance.

The discussion of the problem by Lyas is helpful because he begins by a closer examination of the concept 'intention'.¹⁰⁰ The observations which he thinks should be taken into account are as follows: intentions should not be thought of as private mental events totally detached from verbal and other behaviour; we need sometimes to distinguish between someone's avowed intentions and what we know from his other words and deeds; we must distinguish between an intention in the sense of a plan or design formed prior to an action and an action done intentionally. These considerations take Lyas to the view that it is possible to distinguish between, on the one hand, the relevance of knowledge of and reference to prior intentions and, on the other hand, reference to our knowledge that the work and some of its effects are intentional. He suggests that a strong form of anti-intentionalism would be difficult to sustain:

"This would constitute a total elimination of reference to intention from critical talk about art and would have an interesting consequence. For since the only differences I can see between a work of art and a natural object stem from the fact that intentional human activity is involved in the making of art, so to deny the relevance of any knowledge of intention would be to deny the relevance of any knowledge that one is dealing with art."¹⁰¹

100 C. Lyas, "Personal Qualities and the Intentional Fallacy", in G. Vesey (ed.), Philosophy and the Arts (Macmillan, 1973).

101 *ibid.*, p. 197.

To suggest that the critic must concentrate on what is public, the work itself, and ignore the mind of the artist is to fall into a dualistic view of the relation between mental and non-mental phenomena. Here he makes a comparison between philosophy of mind and philosophy of art,

"(For) if it is possible to replace a dualism of persons and behaviour with the monism of 'persons behaving', it may be possible to replace the dualism of artist and work by a monism of an artist showing himself in the response articulated by the work."¹⁰²

These comments recall a discussion undertaken earlier in this chapter on the general relationship between outward action and inner experiences. Arguments which insist that meaning should only make reference to the outward manifestations of behaviour and not refer to inner experience place great emphasis on avoiding dualism but here Lyas reverses that argument to suggest that to avoid reference to intention is to do precisely that. Midgley makes a similar point in her discussion of the importance of human motives, feelings and intentions.

"... there would certainly be trouble if we were forced to choose between describing outer actions and inner experience - if we could not have both. But we do have both. People have insides as well as outsides; they are subjects as well as objects. And the two aspects operate together. We need views on both to make sense of either. And, normally, both are included in all descriptions of behaviour."¹⁰³

102 C. Lyas, op. cit. (1973), p. 208.

103 M. Midgley, op. cit. (1979), p. 112.

There are clear connections to be made here with those approaches to drama which are concerned with outer behaviour only because in dealing with human behaviour in general,

"... we find intentions, motives, and feelings enormously important. It usually concerns us very little to know the exact details of a man's outward actions. But it can concern us vitally to know his intentions."¹⁰⁴

However, before making the link with drama it will be useful to consider the place of the intention of the percipient (as opposed to the artist) in aesthetic experience. In a discussion of this issue, Elliott has stressed the importance of imaginal experience in response to a work of art.¹⁰⁵ The strength of his case lies in the large number of examples drawn from experiences of response to different art forms in which he describes the importance of the imagination of the observer which can be said to complete the aesthetic experience, or complete the meaning of the work of art. It is as if the percipient stops being merely a spectator and engages imaginatively in the work.

As one of his examples he takes the second line of Yeats' "Byzantium", "The emperor's drunken soldiery are abed", and suggests that the line evokes "ideas of imperial grandeur, brutality and banal humanity".¹⁰⁶ He goes on, however, to suggest that the full

104 M. Midgley, op. cit. (1979), p. 111.

105 R.K. Elliott, "Imagination in the Experience of Art", in G. Vesey (ed.), op. cit. (1973), pp. 88-105.

106 *ibid.*, p. 95.

impact of the line will depend on the heightened activity of the reader's mental power, the imagination makes a creative contribution not just interpretative.

"The reader is imaginably there in Byzantium, and - especially if in his time he has been a drunken soldier and alarmed by drunken soldiery - he will be both with the revellers in the thoroughfares of the city and somewhat vaguely on the fringes of the hubbub hoping for the tumult to subside or pass on."107

Thus an imaginal self or ego enters into the world of the work and contributes precisely what is necessary if the meaning of the work is to be completed,

"an important aesthetic quality of the work is available only to those who are able to respond imaginably to it."108

Elliott is concerned to defend the importance of imaginal and personal response to art against the views of philosophers of art who are influenced by what he calls a basic objectivist Aesthetic:

"I call this Aesthetic 'objectivist' because it interprets aesthetic experience rather strictly on the model of inspecting and coming to know an object. In its most extreme form this Aesthetic presupposes that the sole aim of aesthetic contemplation is the perception or other cognitive grasping of intrinsic qualities of the objective work, without any use of Imagination. According to this view the aesthetic spectator is not called upon to imagine anything but simply to apprehend what is there to be seen."109

107 R.K. Elliott, op. cit. (1973), p. 95.

108 ibid., p. 92.

109 ibid., p. 98.

The view of art advocated by Elliott has similarities with an account given by Sartre in The Psychology of Imagination and relates to his claim that "the work of art is an unreality".¹¹⁰ A work of art, like a portrait of Charles VIII which he takes as an example, is an object. But it is not the same object as the painting, the canvas, which are the real objects of which the painting is composed.

"As long as we observe the canvas and the frame for themselves the aesthetic object 'Charles VIII' will not appear. It is not that it is hidden by the picture, but that it cannot present itself to a realising consciousness."¹¹¹

The aesthetic object then will only appear to a consciousness which becomes imaginative and it is in this context that Sartre refers to the art object as "the correlative of the intentional act of an imaginative consciousness", a quotation which was used earlier with reference to drama.¹¹²

This discussion on intention in art has highlighted two broad views of aesthetics which can be related to drama. In Elliott's terms a basic 'objectivist' Aesthetic is implicit in approaches to drama in which the concern is with 'external' form of action and the meaning of the drama does not admit of any significant reference to the intention of the participants. The

110 J.P. Sartre, op. cit. (1972), p. 219.

111 *ibid.*, p. 219.

112 *ibid.*, p. 219.

contrasting view (to which reference has been made throughout) makes reference in the teaching process to the intention of the participants which can be described as a constituent of the aesthetic meaning of the drama.

The implications of this discussion and the relationship of this current view of drama to the view of aesthetic experience described above has important implications for the importance of aesthetic education in drama. There has been a tendency in drama to talk of educating through aesthetic experience in contrast to educating for aesthetic response to art. Implicit in this view is the idea that educating the ability to respond to works of art must necessarily involve the watching, reading and analysis of plays, learning about dramatic technique, etc. while educational drama has been more concerned with increase in understanding and insight. This contrast might seem odd because 'art' is normally coupled with 'understanding' and 'insight' but it recognises the fact that drama as it is often practised is not overtly concerned with response to works of art. However, with the view of aesthetic experience described here, it is fair to see educational drama as being a form of aesthetic education of the ability of imaginative engagement which is an important foundation for meaningful aesthetic response to art. In other words, a deep, meaningful experience in drama has to be seen as more valuable than an encounter with a superficial text. (There has been a glut of superficial drama texts for schools recently, no doubt to meet the current interest in the subject).

The expansion of the pupils' understanding which becomes the teacher's explicit concern in the drama can be said to begin from the moment of imaginative commitment to the drama:

"Imagination breaks the domination of our ordinary habits of conception and perception - including aesthetic perception - which seems to bind us absolutely to the given world."¹¹³

The increase in understanding which gives content to the teacher's teaching remains part of the aesthetic dimension; it is not dependent merely on the content of the drama but on its aesthetic meaning.

This discussion of meaning then can be related to the earlier discussion of learning. There it was suggested that content can be given to the educational concepts of learning and teaching in drama without the object of learning being confined (e.g. in propositions) in ways which would distort the essential nature of drama. This theme has been continued in this chapter on meaning. The notion of aesthetic meaning does not interpret the meaning of the drama in terms of mere content or external form but reflects the fact that drama operates by virtue of an integration of those factors which contribute to the meaning. Neither does the notion of aesthetic meaning outlaw talk about 'levels of meaning', 'quality of meaning' or 'subjective meaning': the effect of this discussion has been to draw attention to the necessity of using these terms in meaningful contexts with an overall unifying

113 R.K. Elliott, in G. Vesey (ed.), op. cit. (1973), p. 103.

conception of aesthetic meaning. Thus it was suggested the different ways in which the subject has been conceived in its history can be interpreted as an implicit recognition of different views of the meaning of the drama, more recent approaches including the importance of the intentional, imaginative consciousness of the participants.

CHAPTER SIX

FEELING

(i) Introduction

In an earlier chapter it was argued that there has been a significant change of emphasis on the role of feeling in drama, but there are problems associated with describing the nature of that feeling. The importance of attempting some clarification of the issue is that it affects both the way drama is viewed as a learning process and the description of drama as art.

Section one will consider developments in philosophy of mind which influence talk about emotion. This will be in part to cover familiar philosophical ground but the discussion will be important because it will be suggested that the traditional view of emotion which is criticised pervades thinking and writing about drama.

Section two will discuss various forms of the expression theory in aesthetics and the criticisms launched against such theories. These will be related to accounts of feeling in art education and in drama.

Section three will discuss symbolism and will lead to a consideration of more recent aesthetic theories which can be seen to have relevance to drama. The importance of distinguishing drama as symbol from symbolism within drama will be stressed.

Section four will consider more directly the concept of feeling, the relationship between feeling and understanding and the question of drama as art.

(ii) Emotion

The traditional view of emotions to which much criticism in philosophy of mind has been directed has been defined by Ryle as follows:

"Emotions are described as turbulences in the stream of consciousness, the owner of which cannot help directly registering them; to external witnesses they are, in consequence, necessarily occult. They are occurrences which take place not in the public, physical world but in your or my secret, mental world."¹

It will be the purpose of this section to look at the various arguments advanced against this view and then to consider the different emphases given by philosophers in their attempts to offer explanations of how emotion words operate in our language.

It is important to stress this last point, that developments in philosophy of mind are more usefully seen as accounts of the way our language works than as different accounts of what emotions are. It is not, for example, just a matter of saying emotions are not inner turbulences but outward manifestations of behaviour, for this would be to give an oversimplified view and would in any case contradict the evidence of our experience that emotions are in

1 G. Ryle, The Concept of Mind (Hutchinson, 1949), p. 81.

some sense inner turbulences. Developments in the philosophy of mind can perhaps be seen as extending the common sense view rather than totally contradicting it. This point is worth stressing because, once freed from the dictates of the traditional accounts of emotions, it is easy to misinterpret the nature of the criticisms and to give a crude, overly behaviouristic account.

One of the points Ryle makes in his discussion is that a number of words used to identify emotions are not occurrences in a private or public world because they are not occurrences at all. The language we use tends to make us assume that a word like 'vanity' must name a particular entity. This is all the more the case when we are giving explanations for people's actions. 'It was vanity which caused him to do X'. But the vain man is not necessarily subject to particular occurrent sensations of vanity. To say that a man is vain is to say that he has a propensity or tendency to act in a certain way whenever certain circumstances arise.

"Sentences beginning 'whenever' are not singular occurrence reports. Motive words used in this way signify the occurrence of feelings. They are elliptical expressions of general hypothetical propositions of a certain sort, and cannot be construed as expressing categorical narratives of episodes."²

Ryle does not say that the vain man will not at times have certain feelings or sensations, hence the important qualification made earlier that it is not a question of simply saying emotions

2 G. Ryle, op. cit. (1949), p. 83.

are not inner feelings. Instead he is saying that this sort of account is not a sufficient explanation of the way a word like 'vain' is used. If to be vain were simply to have recognisable specific feelings the vain man would be the first to recognise them. In fact it is more often true that it is other people who recognise patterns of behaviour which lead them to describe a man as vain.

It might seem strange to call 'vanity' an emotion word but Ryle's general observation can be applied to a number of words which are used in a causal context or as explanations of motive. To say a man did X and the cause of his action was an emotion Y is not to say, despite the form of the language, that a particular sensation Y caused X. Apart from any other criticism, how would we know that the cause of the overt action was the occurrence of the sensation Y?

A similar criticism is made by Jones when he suggests that there is "an absence of a logical connexion between the emotion and the commotion which is associated with it".³ In other words, emotion words are often used without necessarily implying that the person in question was having particular sensations at the time. One can speak of someone being angry without necessarily suggesting that he was all the time registering particular sensations of anger. Neither is it an adequate denial that one is angry to say

3 J.R. Jones, "The Two Contexts of Mental Concepts", Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society (1958-59), p. 108.

that one did not have particular sensation of anger. We would not withdraw our statement that someone was angry simply because of his avowal that he did not have attendant inner feelings.

Another argument directed at the traditional view of emotion suggests that it is difficult on this view to explain how an emotion can have an object. If 'I am angry with Fred' is referring to the recognition of a unique inner feeling of anger then it has to be explained how the emotion can be said to be directed at Fred. There must be an accompanying cognitive element but how does that element accompany the sensation? As an image? But I may be angry at Fred and have an image of John without it meaning that I am in fact angry with John. As a belief? But it would have to be a belief that my anger is directed at Fred which is exactly what I want to explain, so the argument becomes circular.

Pitcher, who makes this point, goes on in his article to a second criticism of the traditional view. It makes sense in our normal talk about emotions to speak of them as being reasonable or unreasonable. Similarly we can ask for a person's grounds for his emotion. But we do not speak of sensations in the same way,

"... it seems to make no sense to speak of a bodily sensation being unreasonable or reasonable, justified or unjustified and so on; and on the Traditional View, the same must be said of emotions. The View does not allow the notions of reasonableness and justifiability to gain any foothold in the concept of an emotion."⁴

4 G. Pitcher, "Emotion", Mind (Vol. LXXIV, 1965), reprinted in R.F. Dearden, P. Hirst and R.S. Peters (eds.), Reason (Routledge, 1972) Part 2 of Education and the Development of Reason, p. 222.

The above summary of some of the arguments against the traditional view of emotions has drawn from writings of Ryle, Bedford, Jones and Pitcher but their articles interestingly offer different explanations of the way our emotion words operate and it is the explanations of emotion words (particularly those given by Bedford and Pitcher) which have most interest for drama. Bedford has criticised Ryle's account because it relies too heavily on the notion of disposition and does not do justice to the function of emotion words in explaining behaviour. Take, for example, a pair of similar words like indignation and annoyance. It is clear that we do not distinguish them in terms of different inner feelings (which is another argument against the traditional view). An explanation of how we do in fact distinguish them leads to the importance of context.

"The decision whether to say that the driver of a car which has broken down from lack of water is indignant, or merely annoyed or angry, depends on whether the radiator is empty through (let us say) the carelessness of the garage mechanic who undertook to fill it for him or through his own carelessness."⁵

Indignation but not annoyance seems to imply unfairness which in turn points to the social context. Emotion words are in this sense part of a situation.

Pitcher's approach follows a similar line because he looks at emotion situations to discover what their characteristic features are and suggests that having some apprehension and making some

5 E. Bedford, "Emotions", Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society (1956-57), p. 292.

evaluations are central ingredients.

"Thus to say 'I am angry with you' is normally to indicate that one considers what the hearer did to be a bad thing - it may thus be to scold or upbraid the hearer. To say 'I am overjoyed at the news of your success' is normally to indicate that one considers the news to be good - it may thus be to congratulate the hearer ... To construe these utterances as statements of fact, as reports of one's inward state, as the Traditional View would lead us to do, is normally to miss their point ..."⁶

It will now be clear that the general direction of these arguments is not to see emotion words as only referring to inner states. An emotion is what it is, not simply by virtue of its intrinsic characteristics as a feeling but also by virtue of its relationship to its object and to its situation. But does it make sense to speak of emotions existing without inner feelings? It could be argued that some accounts of emotions in philosophy, in trying to free thinking from the misleading traditional view, have gone too far in denying the fact which seems so obvious that emotions are necessarily felt. This is the line Reid takes when he criticises Bedford's denial that emotion is "any sort of feeling or mental process".⁷ It is a question of distinguishing emotion words from emotions. We can say of someone that he is angry but to say of someone that he had the emotion of anger demands the existence of an inner feeling. The point is made by Reid when he says that "actual emotion unfelt is a contradiction

6 G. Pitcher, op. cit. (1965), p. 235.

7 L.A. Reid, Meaning in the Arts (Allen and Unwin, 1969), p. 150.

in terms.⁸ This does not invalidate insights of the kind Ryle makes, that we use emotion words as dispositions, but it suggests that when we are referring to dispositions without attendant feelings we are not, in fact, talking about emotions. It will be argued later that just as it is possible to speak of someone being angry without them necessarily having an emotion of anger, it is also possible to say that someone is having an emotion of anger without them being angry.

The general criticisms of the traditional view of emotions have important implications for education which will be briefly identified before relating the discussion more closely to drama. These emerge in discussion of rationality in philosophy of education. Thus Peters, referring to Hume's distinction between 'reason' and 'passion' says:

"Hume put generations of philosophers on the wrong track by his claim that reason is merely the ability to make inductive and deductive inferences ... What Hume did not appreciate, however, was that these so-called passions are intimately connected with the use of reason rather than distinct entities ..."⁹

In Pitcher's article on emotion quoted above (which significantly is included in the philosophy of education volume on reason) he suggests that when the traditional view of emotion is discarded

8 L.A. Reid, op. cit. (1969), p. 150.

9 R.S. Peters, "Reason and Passion", Royal Institute of Philosophy Lecture, published in G. Vesey (ed.), A Proper Study of Mankind (Macmillan, 1971), reprinted in R.F. Dearden et al. (eds.), op. cit. (1972), p. 62.

"it becomes a little easier to understand how one's reason can control one's emotions".¹⁰ Educational objectives to develop the use of reason should not be interpreted narrowly as being confined to a notion of the exercise of intellectual faculties - human emotions enter our exercise of reason.

On the basis of this type of thinking which is found in philosophy of education it would be possible to develop arguments along the lines that the notion of 'drama for understanding' does not have to imply a narrow concept of developing intellectual faculties, in fact it should not do so because that would be to accept implicitly the Humean distinction between 'reason' and 'passion'. Such an argument would be useful up to a point but would not necessarily face some of the problems identified in an earlier introductory chapter to do with the nature of the emotion experienced in drama in a make-believe situation, the difficulties of assessing quality of the drama in terms of its emotional content and the problems of how the teacher can be said to influence the emotional content of the drama. These sorts of questions will be the concern of this whole chapter but it will be useful to see if the insights gained on emotion so far begin to illuminate them.

Approaches to drama which involved the teacher training children to switch on emotional display have been criticised by

10 G. Pitcher, op. cit. (1965) in R.F. Dearden et al. (eds.), (1972), p. 236. "For one thing, we understand fairly well how reason can control evaluations and some kinds of apprehensions, e.g. beliefs, and these are, according to the present view, important constituents of emotion-situations".

drama exponents. But why should this be wrong? An argument against such an approach could be made persuasive by quoting more extreme examples of overacting or bad theatricality. But what is wrong with a teacher encouraging a class in a particular lesson to imitate, for example, anger in a less extreme way by encouraging them to look angry, to make the appropriate gestures of anger as a way of feeling angry? The answer in one sense is that teachers have recognised that this sort of approach just does not bring an appropriate level of feeling and the drama stays on a superficial level, but what can be said theoretically?

In fact, the approach betrays a traditional view of emotion. To say that someone is angry is to say as much about the situation he is in - this was the point of the earlier discussion. Feelings do not arrive already hall-marked,

"It is from being angry and not from the way I feel that I know that the feelings I am registering signify anger. Feelings receive illumination, they do not give it. And where they occur in connexion with emotion they receive it from their inclusion in a wider complex of meaning which contains other, logical, elements."¹¹

The anger is derived from the situation not applied to it, having been found internally.

What is the drama teacher who tells a class or an individual to try to feel sad actually telling them to do? Obviously recall will be important. But are they trying to recall particular inner

¹¹ J.R. Jones, op. cit. (1958), p. 109.

turbulences? It is perhaps important not to deny that it is possible to recall something of a particular feeling attached to a situation but normally one first recalls the situation itself.

Jones comments:

"Why is it that, if I subsequently recall an occasion on which I showed anger, it is never a texture of inner turbulences that comes to my mind? I seem then to be curiously oblivious of this. In trying to re-live the anger and to understand it, it is outwards in the direction of the situation - the surprised intrigue, the clashing ambitions, the broken promise - that I find my thought groping."¹²

He goes on to quote Anscombe,

"... looking for the meaning of 'anger' in what a man feels who feels angry yields such dissatisfying results, as if the anger itself had slipped between our fingers."¹³

Recall of past situations will have an important role in feeding the drama but the emotion is not induced by an internal trigger but emerges from the context and the individual's evaluation and apprehension of that particular situation. The individual's consciousness is influenced by his recall and associations, though not necessarily at a fully conscious level.

Because the consciousness of the individual is a factor in determining the nature of the emotion, this gives a clue to the distinction between mere pretence and the emotion which properly

12 J.R. Jones, op. cit. (1958), p. 114.

13 ibid., p. 114. He quotes G. Anscombe, "Pretending", Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society Supplement (Vol. xxxii), pp. 287-8.

belongs to drama. There are situations in everyday life in which someone may pretend to be angry for a joke. A mother may pretend to be cross with her child for the sake of giving him the pleasurable sense of relief when he finds out that she is in fact joking. The child is deceived, for the external symptoms are indicative of real anger: her face muscles may be tense, her voice may quiver. It is possible that she may work up bodily feelings which are quite strong. On the analysis of emotion given above which stressed context, evaluation and apprehension it is clearer to see that in this situation it is her own consciousness which will be a strong factor. In this case the fact that she is pretending to have certain feelings for a joke means that the dominant content of the individual's consciousness of the situation will be the fact that what is going on is a joke. It may be remembered that in the chapter on meaning the notion of depth in drama was described in terms of an engagement of consciousness and it will be a little more clear now how that discussion relates to the emotional content of the drama.

The fact that pretend situations have to be taken into account in discussions of emotion has been recognised by philosophers. Bedford refers to the possible objection to his account of emotion (which challenged the simple 'inner feeling' view) which is presented by "the alleged impossibility of distinguishing, from an external observer's point of view, between real anger, say, and the pretence of it".¹⁴ It may be argued that the only

14 E. Bedford, op. cit. (1956), p. 285.

difference can lie in the fact that the man who is pretending is not in the appropriate state of inner feeling. Bedford, however, suggests that the existence of the feeling of anger is not the only criterion for saying whether it is pretence or real.

"It is not an unimportant point that it is usually obvious when someone is pretending. If a man who is behaving as if he were angry goes so far as to smash the furniture or commit an assault, he has passed the limit; he is not pretending, and it is useless for him to protest afterwards that he did not feel angry."¹⁵

It can be argued that Bedford here goes too far in suggesting that patterns of behaviour determine whether someone is angry or not. The more important point, however, implicit in what he says, is that it is useful to ask why we want to make the particular distinction in question. Here it seems to have to do with attributing blame. One cannot excuse one's actions on the grounds that one has not had a particular feeling, on the other hand it seems quite plausible to smash furniture up and say afterwards that one was only pretending to be angry; it would be rather a poor joke but legitimate in the way we use the notion of pretence. The important point is that context and further evidence is likely to determine whether the case is pretence or not.

This point has an important bearing on the assessment of quality of emotion in drama. If it is imagined that this process is somehow equivalent to taking the temperature of the sea with a thermometer then problems are bound to arise. A more accurate

15 E. Bedford, op. cit. (1956), p. 286.

analogy, however, would be to assess the temperature of the sea by feeling the warmth of the sand on one's feet, by taking account of the strength of the wind, the time of the year, one's own body temperature, the height of the sun, one's knowledge of the effect of the tide and so on. In fact, if one were to go by a thermometer reading alone before jumping in, one could be disappointed to find that what one thought was a comfortable temperature was in fact very cold because of the relative heat of one's own body. I think it is fair to say that assessment of quality of feeling in drama is more of a theoretical problem for teachers than it is in actual practice. It is a question of finding a theoretical explanation which accounts for the ease with which an experienced teacher can make the sort of assessment necessary. The stress on context rather than occult inner 'temperature' goes some way towards providing that explanation.

It may be argued that the central question is still, "how can we have a 'real' emotional response to a make-believe situation?". Again, if emotion is thought of as being stimulated by an external cause on a passive recipient then it will admittedly seem strange that we should be moved by an external cause which is not 'real' - one does not die from a blank bullet. On the other hand, if emotion is seen as having intentionality, if due significance is accorded to our imaginative power, the problem can be seen in a different light. It helps to look at the facts of human experience. An individual may be more nervous before an interview when he rehearses it in his mind than during the

actual event. I may get more angry when I am describing an incident to a friend than I did during the actual incident. It is true that these examples make reference to real events (I am remembering events which actually took place or anticipating events which will take place), whereas the question has to do with response to fictitious events, but they serve to bring out the power of human imagination in such contexts.

For the purposes of a theoretical position in drama it may be enough to say that the problem of emotional response is reduced when placed in a wider context. However, from a philosophical point of view, it may appear to beg the question for it might be thought that it is no real answer to the question to quote other emotional responses of a similar kind. It is to say in answer to the question, 'why do we respond to make-believe situations in an emotional way?' - 'that is just the way we are'. Yet I believe that the direction of the answer lies in that sort of approach. Langer's theory of aesthetics begins in Philosophy in a New Key with a consideration of the human need to symbolise and there are interesting parallels with some of the chapters in Midgley's Beast and Man which argues for the importance of a concept of human nature.¹⁶

In an article, "Art and Real Life", Mounce has applied himself to the question which has received discussion in philosophy,

16 M. Midgley, Beast and Man (Methuen, 1979).

how is it possible to feel a real emotion at something we know is not real?¹⁷ His criticism of an earlier article by Radford indicates that he would favour an argument which looks to the facts of human experience.¹⁸ He describes Radford's argument as occurring in three stages: (a) the principle is established that one cannot feel sadness unless one believes that the object of one's sadness exists, (b) one may in reading fiction feel sadness and know that the object does not exist, and (c) it is concluded that such cases as in (b) are incoherent. Mounce suggests that instead of giving the conclusion in (c) we need to use the facts in (b) to question the principle which was established in (a).

"One arrives at a principle; the facts contradict it; one concludes that there is something wrong, not with one's principle, but with the facts. And what is wrong with them? They contradict one's principle."¹⁹

He goes on to discuss the question in terms of human reaction,

"An eye gouged from a socket in a film is not a real eye gouged from a real socket. But it can be so very like the real thing as to produce what in most respects is the same emotion.

This simple and obvious fact about human reaction is literally all we need in order to provide a solution to our problem."²⁰

17 H.O. Mounce, "Art and Real Life", Philosophy (April 1980, Vol. 55, No. 212).

18 C. Radford and H. Weston, "How can we be moved by the fate of Anna Karenina?", Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society Supplement (Vol. 49, 1975), pp. 67-93.

19 H.O. Mounce, *op. cit.* (1980), p. 187.

20 *ibid.*, p. 189.

The point then about emotional response to fictional situations in drama is that they can be real although not exactly equivalent to the response had the situation been real. This accords with the discussion of emotion so far because the fact that the situation is unreal remains part of our consciousness, part of our apprehension and is a constituent factor in determining the emotion. (In fact it will be argued later that this is a key element in the educational potential of drama). It may be useful to employ terminology used by Elliott that the emotion is present in the participants in the drama but not predicable of them.²¹ The feeling of anger in the drama is real but it would be misleading to actually say the participant is angry.

The fact that in drama we are talking about emotion in a make-believe context adds an interesting dimension to the general discussion of emotion. For example, Ryle's distinction between occurrent and dispositional emotional words cannot be applied to drama without some qualifications. According to Ryle, if we say that a man is jealous we may simply be stating that he has a propensity for jealousy, not that he is necessarily sustaining feelings of jealousy at the present time. In a drama it may be necessary for a character to assume the role of a jealous individual but the jealousy will not manifest itself in action until

21 R.K. Elliott, "Aesthetic Theory and the Experience of Art", Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society (Vol. LXVII, 1966-67), reprinted in H. Osborne (ed.), Aesthetics (Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 147. He quotes Plato in the Lysis 271C-218B.

later in the drama. In this case the make-believe context makes Ryle's notion of disposition less easily applicable, for in this sense to say the man is jealous is simply to indicate how he might behave given certain circumstances in the future. In the drama it is necessary for the individual to sustain himself in some way as a jealous person in the course of the drama. He will sustain an image of himself and cultivate a particular attitude of mind of one who is jealous; he will begin to formulate the role prior to any particular action which betrays his jealousy.

This seems to be an aspect of what Bolton means in his discussion of emotion in drama when he makes reference to the notion of disposition for it is fairly clear that he is not using disposition in Ryle's sense. He says,

"Dispositions give direction to behaviour ... a participant may be dependent on finding the appropriate disposition ..."²²

indicating that disposition is taken to refer to a state of some kind rather than just a law-like proposition which predicts future behaviour.

The character who is to play the role of a jealous man whose jealousy will erupt later in the drama may well, if he is to develop the role in some depth, see himself as jealous, sustain a mental attitude of suspicion towards others. He will search for the disposition of a jealous man not in a Rylean sense but

22 G. Bolton, Emotion (Mimeo, University of Durham, 1981), p. 6.

more in the sense of a feeling which colours the way he sees himself and others in the drama. This is what Bolton calls a descriptive attitude when he says:

"... a child role-playing a craftsman evokes a quality of respect for his materials or role-playing an indian chief evokes a quality of seriousness and dignity, role-playing a gang-member, a quality of toughness, role-playing a jealous husband, a quality of suspicion."²³

The purpose of this particular section is to use philosophical discussion of emotion to illuminate questions related to emotion in drama but here perhaps there is an interesting case of an examination of emotional qualities in a fictitious context influencing philosophical discussion of emotion. It would be too much of a diversion to extend this point in any detail, but reflection on the fictitious context may suggest that Ryle's analysis purges the language we use to talk about emotions too much of feelings. The jealous man in drama consciously sustains feelings of jealousy - in reality the jealous man may have feelings he is not aware are feelings of jealousy. Obviously it is important to recognise the dispositional use of emotion words but it is important to recognise too that the vain man and the jealous man may have more actual feelings (not twinges and twitches but feelings nevertheless) than Ryle would admit, feelings, that is, that they may not recognise and have to learn to recognise.

23 G. Bolton, op. cit., (1981), p. 7.

The above discussion calls for a closer discussion of the concept of feeling but before doing so it will be important to look at the concept of expression.

(iii) Expression

The concept of expression has importance both in aesthetic theory and in theories of art education and before looking at expression as it applies to drama, it will be useful to give some consideration to its use in these fields.

Expression theories in aesthetics have taken different forms and can be seen as different ways of explaining the way feeling relates to art. An artistic process can be said to include the artist, the art object and the percipient and different forms of the expression theory have given different accounts of where the feeling which attaches to art can be said to belong. Osborne has placed such theories in their historical context; they emerged from the romantic movement which embodied a number of attitudes:

"... the elevation of the artist; the exaltation of originality; the new value set on experience as such with a special emphasis on the affective and emotional aspects of experience; and the new importance attached to fiction and invention."²⁴

The artist is not so much seen as inspired by the gods but is in the more extreme forms elevated himself to something like that status. The importance of the experience of the individual artist in the act of creation is translated into self-expression theory of art.

24 H. Osborne, Aesthetics and Art Theory (Longmans, 1968), p. 132.

This form of expression theory concentrates attention on what is going on in the process of creation: the artist is said to be expressing an inner feeling in the work of art. There is also the idea that in expressing his feelings which are confused and chaotic the artist clarifies them. Collingwood explains the process as follows,

"The artist proper is a person who, grappling with the problem of expressing a certain emotion, says, 'I want to get this clear'."²⁵

This version of the expression theory concentrates attention on the feelings of the artist and is distinct from any question of attempting to arouse emotion in the percipient. In fact, intention to do so was to be avoided - the artist is concerned with expressing his own emotion not primarily with communication of that emotion.

The arguments against the self-expression view of emotion in art have been usefully summarised by Hospers.²⁶ First of all an examination of the actual creative process raises certain problems. What we know of artists suggests that it is by no means clear that the creative process follows the pattern suggested

25 R.G. Collingwood, "Expression in Art", from The Principles of Art (Clarendon, 1938), reprinted in M. Weitz, Problems in Aesthetics (Macmillan, N.Y., 1959), p. 190.

26 J. Hospers, "The Concept of Artistic Expression", in Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society (Vol. 55, 1954-55), pp. 313-44, reprinted in J. Hospers (ed.), Introductory Readings in Aesthetics (Free Press, N.Y., 1969).

by this theory. Many records left by artists contradict the romantic notion of "solitary geniuses engaged in mysterious acts of self-expression".²⁷ It has been recognised that great art has been produced by people who would not testify to being caught in the throes of creation,

"... the motivation, the ends and aims, as well as the inner springs of artistic activity are, I am sure, a very mixed lot; and to assume that the artist qua artist is always expressing seems just as one-sided as the earlier assumption that he is always imitating nature or human action."²⁸

If this form of the expression theory is used as a criterion for evaluating art, there is a further problem to be faced. Many people who have experienced various emotional turmoils in creation have not, in fact, produced anything that one would want to call good art. Of course, all sorts of questions to do with the criteria for determining what is to constitute good art are raised here but accounts of art which developed after the more extreme version of self-expression theories stress formal criteria which belong to the work of art itself. Some of these theories, it is now recognised, went too far in stressing formal elements in art but it is fair to say that critical appreciation of a work of art tends to concentrate more on the work of art itself; it hardly matters for our appreciation what the artist felt. In the chapter on meaning the intentional fallacy was discussed, and the self-expression theory can be viewed as an

27 J. Hospers, op. cit. (1969), p. 146.

28 *ibid.*, p. 146.

extreme case of this fallacy in which the feeling of the artist is of supreme importance. Yet another objection to the theory is the implication that the artist embodies in the work of art only those emotions which he himself experienced and critics have pointed out that this goes in the face of what we know about artists and works of art.

It is important here by way of balance to say that critics of the expression theory did not deny that the artist is drawing on his emotional life, his inner life of feelings and knowledge of human feeling but the process is a more subtle one than the naive version of self-expression. In fact, the more extreme formal theories of art could be said to neglect the ingredient of human expression in art and were criticised on these grounds.²⁹

Two other versions of the expression theory make reference to the percipient. The communication view of expression suggests that the artist expresses his own emotion and does so in such a way as to evoke a like emotional attitude in the percipient.

"Communication theories of art must be classified in general as instrumental theories in that they assume the central function of art is to assist a certain sort of communication among men, and as their standard for appraising particular works of art they apply the yardstick of their effectiveness in communicating emotion or experience."³⁰

It will be clear that this version of the theory can be subjected to the same sorts of objections which were levelled against self-

29 J. Hospers (ed.), op. cit. (1969), p. 87ff - articles by Bell, Fry and Reid in a section, "Art as Form".

30 H. Osborne, op. cit. (1968), p. 167.

expression with the further problem that we are unlikely to know for sure "that the feeling in the mind of the artist was anything like the feeling aroused in the listener or observer(?)"³¹

The evocation view sees art as expressive in as much as a particular emotion is evoked in the percipient. This version of the theory can be said to be less extreme than the other two described and is thus not subject to the same criticism. Its status as a theory perhaps can be said to depend partly on how the emotion in the percipient is actually described and how far it does justice to a consideration of the effect on emotion of the formal elements of the art object.

More recent aesthetic theories can still be seen as a version of the expression theory but they concentrate attention on the art object. The trend of thinking in aesthetics gave a different emphasis to both the act of creation (rejecting the romantic view of expression of emotion) and the response to art (which is not represented by ordinary emotional response). Modern versions of expression theory will be discussed later but as it is the self-expression and communication theories of expression which have influenced art in education, it will be useful to consider approaches to art education before returning to further consideration of these aesthetic theories.

The version which has had the strongest influence is the self-expression theory. Osborne has commented,

31 J. Hospers (ed.), *op. cit.* (1969), p. 169.

"This idea of art as generalised self-expression dominates modern criticism and educational practice, in which the child is encouraged to 'express himself' rather than to learn and follow rules of correctness."³²

But the communication theory has also had an influence. The following is from a section on verse speaking in Thurburn's Voice and Speech:

"The emotional response lies in the recapture of the emotion that inspired the poem and is immensely heightened if the reader is experiencing in his own person feelings somewhat similar to those of the poet."³³

More recently, the Schools Council project, "Arts and the Adolescent", suggests that the prime concern of the arts curriculum should be with "the emotional development of the child through creative self-expression".³⁴ The project recognises that this view of the educational function of the arts is not in itself new but suggests that concepts like self-expression and personal development have not been well understood and have not provided the arts curriculum with an organising principle. In order to do so the report draws on a theory developed by Witkin in his Intelligence of Feeling.³⁵

32 H. Osborne, op. cit. (1968), p. 162.

33 G. Thurburn, Voice and Speech (Nisbet, 1939), p. 86.

34 M. Ross, "Arts and the Adolescent", Schools Council Working Paper 54 (Methuen, 1975), p. 56.

35 R. Witkin, The Intelligence of Feeling (Heinemann, 1974).

In this book the author attempts to produce a conceptual framework for arts teachers which will solve some of the problems associated with the teaching of the creative arts. One of the problems which Witkin uncovers from interviews with teachers is that, although they regard self-expression as fundamental in arts teaching, they have difficulties in making a distinction theoretically between legitimate and illegitimate forms of expression. Witkin's solution is to advance a theory which makes a distinction between subjective-reactive behaviour which is the mere discharge of an emotion and subjective-reflexive behaviour which is the foundation of the intelligence of feeling:

"The kicking in of a window in response to an angry impulse is in my terms an example of 'subject-reactive' behaviour. The individual extends the sensate impulse, the disturbance within him, in behaviour in a medium. The impulse is released and burned up in the behaviour but the behaviour does not reciprocate it. The behaviour is not a means of recalling the disturbance and thereby of assimilating it into Being. In subject-reactive behaviour a disturbance is discharged without being assimilated into Being. When the individual paints a picture or composes a piece of music, however, his use of the expressive medium reciprocates his impulse in the sense of being that which recalls it. Such behaviour, if it does reciprocate in this way, is 'subject-reflexive'."³⁶

Witkin has moved away from the simple notion of a discharge of emotion which has tended to dominate thinking in arts education but is clear that his theory from an aesthetic point of view follows a self-expression approach to emotion in art. Bolton, in discussing the application of Witkin's theory to drama has made

36 R. Witkin, op. cit. (1974), p. 33.

some very telling criticisms: emotion is seen merely as the passive partner of a stimulus-response relationship; the distinction between reflexive behaviour and reaction seems on close analysis to be more one of degree than kind; the examples of drama lessons arise simply from an observation of bad teaching; the theory does not take into account the important aspect that participants become emotionally engaged in the theme during the dramatic process.³⁷ Perhaps the most telling criticism is levelled against Witkin's solution for arts education which must surely be a disappointment for teachers. Despite the Piagetian framework which presents the theory in terms of similarities of structure in emotion (which, although original, might be seen as an oversimplified account of the rich complexities of our emotional lives), the formula Witkin suggests is a familiar one to teachers and "smacks of the well-tried style of lesson planning where the teacher puts on a record inviting the class to write an essay or paint a picture ..."³⁸ I propose to concentrate on Witkin's account of emotion which is open to the same philosophical criticism that can be directed at aesthetic theories of self-expression.

It is clear that Witkin is employing a causal notion of emotion when he says:

"Whatever sensations, feelings or emotions that I experience, from the most basic to the most elaborate,

37 G. Bolton, op. cit. (1981).

38 *ibid.*, p. 14.

they consist of disturbance within me which provides the energy, the motivation to behave in respect of physical or symbolic objects. I act in the world because my being is disturbed in the world."³⁹

In limiting his view of the way emotion words operate in our language Witkin is here subject to the philosophical criticisms advanced earlier in this chapter. Ryle has pointed out that when we ask, "why did someone act in a certain way?", the question might be an enquiry into the cause of his acting or be an inquiry into the character of the agent. Explanations by motives, he suggests, belong more to the second type. If we construe particular feelings or impulses as motives, "no one could ever know or even, usually, reasonably conjecture that the cause of someone else's overt action was the occurrence in him of a feeling".⁴⁰ Midgley says that when we talk of an animal being moved now by fear, now by curiosity, now by territorial anger, "These are not names of hypothetical inner states, but of major patterns in anyone's life, the signs of which are regular and visible".⁴¹

The problem for the teacher according to Witkin is how he can become part of the expressive act of the child. His own observation of teachers leads him to conclude,

"The arts teacher rarely involves himself in the process of developing or evoking the sensate disturbance within the pupil which is to be the origin of the pupil's self-expression."⁴²

39 R. Witkin, op. cit. (1974), p. 5.

40 G. Ryle, op. cit. (1949), p. 87.

41 M. Midgley, op. cit. (1979), p. 106.

42 R. Witkin, op. cit. (1974), p. 36.

Witkin's solution to this problem is inevitably blinkered by his own linear, cause-effect model of emotional disturbance followed by expression. The only solution available, given this erroneous presentation of the problem, is for the teacher to set a 'sensible problem', the teacher will touch the inner trigger and stimulate creative activity that way. The theory does not recognise that feeling will develop from an engagement with a particular context, whether it be a drama or the writing of a poem.

The links between Witkin's theory and aesthetic theories of art which rely on self-expression centre on this view of emotion. Bouwsma, in his discussion of expression theories of art, says that the language of emotion is dominantly the language of water.

"Emotions are stored up, blocked. Emotions accumulate. And what happens now? Well, one of two things may happen. Emotions may quite suddenly leap up like spray, and find a way out, or again a poet may dip into the pool with his word dipper, and then dip them out. It's as though the emotions come over the dam in little boats (the poems) and the little boats may be used over and over again to carry over new surges. And this too may be described in this way: The poet 'expresses' his emotion."⁴³

Implicit in this article is the recognition that for a long time aesthetics has, in contrast to the 'liquid' view, concentrated attention on the art object in trying to determine the relationship of feeling to art. As suggested earlier, this approach can be seen as another version of expression theory but now it becomes a problem of describing how emotion can be said to be in works of art.

43 O.K. Bouwsma, "The Expression Theory of Art", in W. Elton (ed.), Aesthetics and Language (Basil Blackwell, 1959), p. 89.

Thus Langer's theory of aesthetics can be seen as an attempt to answer this question. Articles by Bouwsma, Hepburn, Morris-Jones and Osborne and more recently, Nolt, have all been directed to this question.⁴⁴

One of the criticisms of self-expression theory identified above questioned the importance of the artist's feelings at the time of creation:

"The hapless artist seems to have suffered the worst from this muddle. He is sometimes alleged to be having some emotion or other (other than that of being thoroughly interested in his job) whenever he is doing his work; or at least to be in some unexplained way reviving or recalling some emotion that he has previously had ... Which particular emotions these are, is usually left unspecified; presumably because we should only have to mention such emotions as boredom, jealousy, restlessness, irritation, and hilarity in order to make the whole story sound as ridiculous as it is."⁴⁵

Perhaps Ryle's choice of examples here can be described as being a little extreme but his point can be made more forcibly by saying that the feeling of the artist in the process of creation may be as much directed towards his craft, towards a conscious manipulation of the formal elements of his art.

The problem for art educators, however, is that the sort of account which places less emphasis on the feeling of the creator

44 Articles by Hepburn, Morris-Jones and Osborne from *The British Journal of Aesthetics*, reprinted in, H. Osborne (ed.), *Aesthetics in the Modern World* (Thames and Hudson, 1958). J. Nolt, "Expression and Emotion", in *The British Journal of Aesthetics* (Vol. 21, No. 2, Spring 1981).

45 G. Ryle, "Feelings", in W. Elton (ed.), *op. cit.* (1959), p. 72.

will not do if art education is to be seen as an education of feeling. The Schools Council report on arts states that art education should not become predominantly another form of problem-solving activity in the cognitive field, nor does its future lie in helping children come to terms with their cultural heritage.

"The relevance of the art in education is to the world of feeling ... and ... nothing else will serve."⁴⁶

On this basis the emotions and feelings of the children during the creative process are thought to be important so that in order to explain the emotional experience in creation it is necessary to draw on outmoded expression theories.

If the discussion now returns to drama, the problem can be summarised as follows. Much drama in school involves the pupils in creative dramatic activity. For teachers and writers on drama, the nature of the emotional content of the dramatic experience is important. Modern aesthetics tends to concentrate on the feeling which belongs to the form, the product, so that in order to give a theoretical basis for the aesthetic experience of the participants it is necessary to draw on self-expression theories of aesthetics which can be easily criticised on aesthetic grounds. One answer to the problem is to say that it just does not matter: drama in education, it may be argued, is concerned with education and whether it satisfies criteria of art or aesthetic experience is less important. But this line of argument will not satisfy

46 M. Ross, op. cit. (1975), p. 52.

those people who are concerned with the status of drama as art education. Some reservations about the way drama has developed have been precisely that the art is being neglected in pursuit of learning objectives.

One alternative is to see aesthetic education solely as an education of the ability to appreciate works of art.⁴⁷ Appreciation must be seen as an important part of arts education but to relinquish creative activity merely on the grounds that a satisfactory account of the emotional content cannot be found seems a little drastic. It might be argued that a theoretical basis is not necessary but the work of Ross and Witkin does illustrate that theoretical problems associated with feeling and emotion emerge as problems in the praxis of teachers.

In this section a partial solution to this problem will be suggested which will be developed in the rest of this chapter in sections on symbolism and feeling. It may be remembered that in the discussion of expression theories in aesthetics, the evocation version was only given brief attention. This was the theory which made reference to the emotional response of the percipient. It is this aspect of the theory which now needs closer attention.

In an article entitled "Aesthetic Theory and the Experience of Art", Elliott has suggested that exaggerated versions of expression theory (described earlier in this section) has obscured the insight that some works of art are capable of being experienced

47 A line being developed by David Hargreaves. Work not yet published.

as if they were human expression.

"The expression theorists recognised that a poem can be perceived not as an object bearing an impersonal meaning but as if it were the speech or thought of another person and that it is possible for us to make this expression our own."⁴⁸

Elliott is here casting doubt on the adequacy of aesthetic theories which are exclusively objectivist.

This approach to aesthetics by Elliott was discussed in the section on meaning in the context of an article which stressed the importance of the imagination of the percipient in response to art. The interesting aspect of the present article under discussion is that it relates this approach to the whole notion of expression. With detailed accounts of aesthetic experience drawn from different art forms he develops his argument which stresses the creative contribution made by the subject in the experience of art. To experience a poem, for example, 'from within' is to experience it not so much as an object but from, in imagination, the poet's situation, from the place of the expressing subject.

"When experiencing a poem from within we do not fix our attention upon it but live it according to a certain imaginative mode. This is not sufficient from the aesthetic point of view, but it is not in any way aesthetically improper."⁴⁹

48 R.K. Elliott, "Aesthetic Theory and the Experience of Art", in Proceedings of the Aristotelean Society (Vol. LXVII, 1966-67), reprinted in, H. Osborne (ed.), Aesthetics (Oxford University Press, 1972), p. 146.

49 *ibid.*, p. 149.

The sort of subjective engagement which Elliott describes may be with the situation or perspective of the poet or it may be with the work itself. The percipient may be transformed into a mode of perception which seems to see the reality of what is presented:

"A picture like Rouault's Flight Into Egypt would be quite insignificant if it did not have the power suddenly to make it seem that we are actually there, in an unbounded landscape, with the sky extending over us in a chill dawn. Our point of view shifts spontaneously from a point outside the world of the work to a point within it."⁵⁰

The process Elliott describes in aesthetic response to art is the sort of experience which belongs to drama. In the latter, of course, the situation is more concrete, more accessible and in that sense more real because it is based on the real participation of the individual. It does not make the same demands on the participants because the act of identification is synonymous with the act of creation and is a necessary part of it, but the process is similar enough to be usefully applied to emotional experience in drama.

In drama the pupils are engaged in creative activity but it is more accurate from the point of view of explaining the aesthetic experience qua emotional content to see the participants in drama as percipients. It will be argued in the following sections that there are a number of factors which make this view seem desirable.

50 R.K. Elliott, op. cit. (1972), p. 154.

(iv) Symbolism

The topic of symbolism is wide and this section cannot hope to treat the area in very great depth. The main purpose will be to briefly clarify some issues which will develop the arguments of the previous section and will make the discussion of feeling in drama more direct and lucid. With these aims in mind, this section will stress the importance of identifying the difference between the use of symbolism in an art form and the art object as symbol. It will go on to give an account of how symbols in drama can accrue meaning and depth of feeling for the participants. In this respect the account of symbolism will follow discussions of the topic by Bolton and Allen but here it will be argued that the participants should be viewed as percipients.

Langer's aesthetic theory (which influenced the discussion of symbolism in Learning Through Drama) is based on her account of symbolism given in Philosophy in a New Key, so it will be useful to give some attention to her notion of art as symbol and to consider criticisms which have been made of that idea. Langer distinguishes between discursive and presentational symbolism. Discursive symbolism refers to a particular feature of language which is that,

"All language has a form which requires us to string out our ideas even though their objects rest one within the other: as pieces of clothing that are actually worn one over the other have to be strung side by side on the clothesline."⁵¹

51 S. Langer, Philosophy in a New Key (Harvard University Press, 1942), p. 81.

She asserts that there are matters which require to be conceived through some symbolistic schema other than discursive language. In order to demonstrate the possibility of non-discursive symbolism she considers the basic process involved in perception: "Our merest sense-experience is a process of formulation".⁵² By this she means that unless the sensory organs select predominant forms from the mass of sensory experience we would not be able to perceive things as objects of sense. The meaning of presentational symbolism is understood only through the meaning of the whole.

The importance of presentational symbolism is summarised by Rader: it can express,

"the whole subjective side of existence that discourse is incapable of expressing - our moods, emotions, desires, the sense of movement, growth, felt tensions and resolutions, even sensations and thoughts in their characteristic passage. It does this not by a gushing forth of emotion but by an articulating of the 'logical forms' of subjectivity."⁵³

This distinction then is the basis of Langer's aesthetic theory which is developed in detail over several volumes.

Langer's Philosophy in a New Key was published in 1942 and it is clear that she is reacting to the dominance of positivistic thinking at the time, "Every discursion beyond propositional thought has dispensed with thought altogether ..."⁵⁴ At the start of her

52 S. Langer, op. cit. (1942), p. 89.

53 M. Rader (ed.), A Modern Book of Aesthetics (Holt, Rinehart and Winston, U.S.A., 1935, revised fourth edition, 1973), p. 282. American spelling, "Esthetics".

54 S. Langer, op. cit. (1942), p. 92.

chapter four she acknowledges the influence of Wittgenstein's Tractatus. Discursive symbolism is language in its normal use employing words and rules of grammar - the meaning can be paraphrased and it refers to the neutral world of thought least tinged by subjective feeling. Langer sees (with the early Wittgenstein) a basic logical analogy between word structures and their meanings - an isomorphic (one to one) relationship between the basic elements of propositions and that which they represent or picture.

This isomorphic feature of language (which, of course, was rejected by the later Wittgenstein) is echoed in the account Langer gives of the way art parallels the life of feeling. Although writers have not tended to draw attention to the similarities between her view of art and the Tractatus view of language, they have not been slow to criticise her theory.

Reid has been a very constructive critic of her views because he has identified and preserved the important insights her theory offers and the points of agreement with his own. His basic criticism, however, is that the life of feeling takes place in a context - feelings are 'feelings of' and the character of any feeling is concrete and particular. This leads him to ask,

"... how can the 'form' of one kind of concrete feeling or complex of feelings, the feelings of 'life' be projected into another form, the form of art? The feelings (and the 'forms' of feeling) of life outside art and the feelings (and the 'forms' of feeling) inside art are, concretely, different."⁵⁵

55 L. Reid, Meaning in the Arts (Allen and Unwin, 1969), p. 61.

Osborne similarly has expressed doubts that the form of a work of art can be isomorphic with a particular feeling:

"I am myself profoundly sceptical of the notion that a tonal or a visual structure can be isomorphic with the pattern of an affective state. Besides specific emotions (fury over the loss of a penny) we know in introspection unattached, 'objectless' feelings or moods which while they last colour the whole content of conscious experience like a floating charge on the furniture of the mind. Moods of sadness or joy, elation, depression, serenity, restlessness (Locke's 'uneasiness'), apathy, vivacity, irritability and so on are not directed upon any particular stimulus in awareness or tied up with any impulse to particular action. Their causes are often obscure."⁵⁶

The importance of these reservations is that they have relevance to the notion of art as symbol. Reid extends his criticism to this aspect of Langer's theory:

"The meaning of the perceptua of art is certainly not separate from them and, in aesthetic experience, not even distinguishable. It is this which makes the use of the word 'symbol' very questionable as applied to art."⁵⁷

Reid's concern is that 'symbol' has a use which is established and not readily applicable to aesthetics. What a symbol normally means is conceptually distinguishable from the symbol itself. It is for this reason Reid prefers the term 'embodiment' to 'expression' for the latter suggests the 'liquid' view of emotion described earlier.

The notion of symbolism is often used with reference to drama. The concept is central to the Schools Council report in which the

56 H. Osborne, "The Quality of Feeling in Art", British Journal of Aesthetics (3, 1, January 1963), p. 45.

57 L. Reid, op. cit. (1969), p. 71.

drama is called a "symbolic situation" and the pupils are said to be "representing problems of subjective understanding in symbolic form".⁵⁸ This use of symbolism, referring to the representative nature of drama, seems fair enough but the problems arise if the feeling content of the drama is explained by reference to the notion of drama as symbol. The value of drama, it is said, is that "it gives children opportunities to explore, interpret, express and communicate feelings and ideas by representing them in a variety of symbolic forms".⁵⁹ This quotation can be interpreted in two ways. There may be the implication that children have a store of feelings to which they are able to give expression in the drama lesson in contrast to the view which sees the process of engaging the pupils in a dramatic situation as a process which gives rise to new feelings which are embodied in that particular context. "Our feeling-experience of it is new and individual, concrete because it is feeling of that total situation and no other".⁶⁰ This is not to deny that the drama emerges from life-experience, indeed much school drama is highly representative, but to say that the situation symbolises the feelings of real life is to present a misleading account. If the teacher is pursuing 'real' feeling or 'symbolised' feeling with reference to the equivalent real situation then it is likely to influence the teaching approach in various ways.

58 L. McGregor et al., Learning Through Drama (Heinemann, 1977), p. 16.

59 *ibid.*, p. 206.

60 L. Reid, *op. cit.* (1969), p. 63.

In the discussion of meaning in the last chapter the notion of 'drama as unreality' was stressed. This was to challenge the tendency to make the drama equivalent to the real situation as far as possible: this approach influences the notion of emotional depth as well as the way learning objectives are characterised. The advantage of the drama, it is thought, is that the pupils come as close as possible to experiencing whatever the represented situation is. To put it crudely: if the class do a play about being locked in a room then the learning area and the feeling content of the drama have to do exclusively with being locked in a room. One could well argue that they might as well be locked in a room. The example oversimplifies the issue but very often this concern with verisimilitude occupies the thoughts of the teacher.

There are parallels here with naturalism in aesthetics, "the ambition to confront the observer with a convincing semblance of the actual appearances of things ..."61 The evaluative criteria here is how far the art object corresponds with the reality being depicted. The idea of creating a life semblance runs through classical art. Osborne describes some of the ideas associated with naturalism:

"It is inherent to the outlook of naturalism that attention is deflected from the work of art towards the subject represented. The work of art becomes as it were transparent and we look through it at that which it represents. We do not see a beautiful statue but a beautiful body skilfully 'imitated' or the signs of emotional experience presented."62

61 H. Osborne, op. cit. (1968), p. 32.

62 *ibid.*, p. 37.

The feeling in the drama arises from the engagement with the particular situation, treating it as if it were real but with a consciousness that it is not real - this will be discussed in the section on feeling but it will now be necessary to look at the use of symbolism within drama.

In order to do so it will be useful to consider the use of symbolism in Pinter's The Caretaker. Pinter's own comments about the play are interesting:

"I do see this play as merely ... a particular human situation, concerning three particular people and not, incidentally ... symbols,"⁶³

and,

"I start off with people, who come onto a particular situation. I certainly don't write from any kind of abstract idea. And I wouldn't know a symbol if I saw one."⁶⁴

How are these comments to be reconciled with what various critics have said about symbolism in the play and the knowledge our own reading reveals: shoes that will not fit, the statue of the Buddha, the papers in Sidcup, a shed which has to be built - are these not symbols? And is not the whole play to be seen as symbolic of the human condition - characters trying to establish a real identity in the world?

63 Interview with Tynan, quoted in M. Esslin, The Theatre of the Absurd (Penguin, 1968), p. 280.

64 H. Pinter, "Writing for Myself", based on a conversation with Richard Findlater, reprinted in Pinter Plays Two (Eyre Methuen, 1977), p. 10.

Pinter's comments suggest that his primary interest is in the concrete human situation as presented. He is not in the business of indicating that A should stand for B or for B, C and D. The point is that objects and actions in the play accrue a deep significance in the way they are presented in the play without losing their essential realistic meaning in the context of the particular situation in the play. The nature of the dramatic art form is to transcend but not to leave the particular.⁶⁵ Thus we may see Aston's attempts to make his room habitable as "an image for man's struggle for order in a chaotic world",⁶⁶ or as a reflection of man's instinctive fight for territory but fundamentally it is about a man who wants to organise a place to live.

On this basis it is easier to understand Pinter's comments which carry the implicit recognition that the creation of a symbol in literature and, by implication, response to symbolic import is not necessarily a cognitive process which recognises either explicitly or tacitly that A means B but is rather a process of recognising the deep and poignant feeling which can centre on a particular object or action because of its context. Neither does that mean that the nature of the symbolic import is necessarily totally beyond description. Some actual specific recognition

65 See chapters 1 and 4 in K. Robinson (ed.), Exploring Theatre and Education (Heinemann, 1980). The universal v. particular argument is partly resolved by this approach which includes both.

66 M. Esslin, Pinter - A Study of His Plays (Methuen, 1970), p. 110.

of symbolism may be part of our response to the play or indeed it may be fair to see a literary critic's job as in part to make explicit what is implicit in the symbol. This in turn is not to deny the subjective nature of the response to the work but to recognise that the work has objective qualities. As Greger has pointed out, "activity of literary appreciation necessarily involves subjective responses to an objective work".⁶⁷

It is possible then for the audience to respond to the poignancy of the play with a feeling of its significance without articulating the nature of the experience.

"The starting point is not the possible interpretation: but the concrete image - two young men, an old one, a room. The more concretely, individually and realistically this situation is enacted and thereby explored in depth, the greater its complexity and richness of human associations will become, the wider the general implications which radiate outward from this central image like waves spreading from a stone thrown into a pond."⁶⁸

All this is not to deny that there is a more explicit use of symbolism in literature and specifically in drama in which the meaning of a particular symbol can be more easily seen to be conceptually distinct from the object just as a flag is made to symbolise a country but the flag as a piece of cloth is meaningless in itself.⁶⁹ What I am describing is in a sense closer to metaphor

67 S. Greger, "Aesthetic Meaning", Proceedings of the Philosophy of Education Society (Supplementary Issue, Vol. vi, 2, 1972), p. 147.

68 M. Esslin, op. cit. (1970), p. 110.

69 See, M. Polanyi and H. Porsch, Meaning (University of Chicago Press, 1975), p. 78.

when two or more meanings combine without one replacing another.⁷⁰

I have concentrated on this account of symbolism drawn from The Caretaker rather than looking at symbolism more widely in dramatic literature because its use here most closely parallels symbolism in children's dramatic activity. There is a tendency to think of symbolism in drama operating in a strictly isomorphic way. Thus Wagner's account of Heathcote's use of symbolism describes how a bracelet is selected to symbolise a chief's power, an item of adornment to symbolise the difference between a chief and other people.⁷¹ Yet it could be said that much of Heathcote's drama operates with symbolism at a less explicit level. It can be argued that to focus the attention of the group on symbolism in an explicit way may be to reduce the potential for meaning and feeling to accrue - a focal conscious awareness may limit that potential.

The use of symbolism described here is not confined to literature or art. Winnicott has suggested that the child's use of transitional object (a blanket or cuddly toy which brings comfort as a mother substitute) is the child's first use of symbolism. "The object is a symbol of the union of the baby and the mother (or part of the mother)".⁷² Is this then an attempt to describe

70 M. Polanyi and H. Porsch, op. cit. (1975), p. 82.

71 B.J. Wagner, Dorothy Heathcote: Drama as a Learning Medium (Washington D.C., National Education Association of the United States, 1976), p. 92.

72 D. Winnicott, Playing and Reality (Penguin, 1971), p. 114.

the prelinguistic consciousness of the child? For a child to use a symbol in this way is it necessary for him to have a concept of 'mother' let alone a concept of 'symbol'? This discussion would lead into an intriguing area of how appropriate it is to say that the child at a certain age has a concept of 'mother' and what a 'partial concept' might mean, but it is enough for the purposes of this discussion to say that the description of the use of symbol does not demand a conscious recognition that the child sees the blanket as symbol - it is describing the patterns of behaviour and feelings of the child.⁷³

If symbolism is seen as an aspect of form, this present discussion can be related to the account of form given in the previous chapter. The notions of focal and subsidiary awareness and integration drawn from Polanyi were there employed to give an explanation of how form becomes an integral part of the aesthetic meaning of the drama. Polanyi's own discussion of poetry explains how in reading a poem the formal aspects bear on its meaning because they present themselves to consciousness, although the reader is not necessarily fully consciously aware of their effect.

"In other words, the rhythm, rhyme, sound, grammar, and all the other more subtle formal aspects of a poem, along with the several allusions of its parts, all jointly bear on the meaning of the poem. We are not therefore aware focally of what they add to that meaning and how they affect its quality."⁷⁴

73 The notion of a partial concept is important in D.W. Hamlyn's, Experience and the Growth of Understanding (Routledge, 1978).

74 M. Polanyi and H. Porsch, op. cit. (1975), p. 80.

The point of returning to this discussion of form here is that it lends support to the value of viewing the participants in drama qua feeling as percipients for this view accords more with the consciousness of form which is manifest in the drama. It would be wrong to suggest that there is a simple distinction between creation and perception of art in terms of consciousness of form. There are cases of course where the artist is using formal techniques in a less than fully conscious way and our experience of art tells us that specific awareness of form enters into our appreciation of art. The discussion needs to proceed more cautiously and suggest that it is possible to indicate a change of emphasis in consciousness of form of the kind indicated. Certainly this view accords with criticisms of expression theory that it gives a too narrow account of the creative process as pure spontaneity.

On a first reading of Yeats' "The Sorrow of Love", the poem might well appear to be a "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings" (unlike so many of Yeats' poems), but closer attention reveals the impressive craftsmanship at work to achieve structure which is vital to the import of the poem.⁷⁵ An earlier draft of the same poem reveals the reworking with conscious attention to form. The revision focuses on the contrast between order and disorder of stanzas 1 and 3 conveyed by careful juxtaposition of

75 W.B. Yeats, "The Sorrow of Love", in Collected Poems of Yeats (Macmillan, 1933), p. 45.

key words and this restructuring is an integral part of the poem's meaning which takes on a wider significance than the simple love poem it had been.

Attention to structure by the reader is likely to enhance rather than diminish the reading but the process described by Polanyi in his discussion of a poem's meaning seems to have to work for an appreciation of its full import. He comments:

"Its meaning may be brought back to us with a deeper understanding when we turn our focal attention back upon the poem instead of upon its parts."⁷⁶

If the teacher is looking for depth of feeling in a creative drama process there is likely to be less focal attention to form during the drama than, for example, if the pupils are specifically working at a piece of theatre. This is not to make a judgement on one activity or another but to suggest that a theoretical distinction can be preserved which will guide the teacher's practice according to his particular aims. The link between form and feeling (the two vital aesthetic ingredients) can be more easily seen if the participants are viewed as percipients. They are both simultaneously creating the drama and responding to it as object.

(v) Feeling

Reference has been made to feeling throughout this chapter but it is time to look at the concept in a more systematic way at the start of this section. Ryle has explored some of the different

76 M. Polanyi and H. Porsch, op. cit. (1975), p. 80.

uses of feeling and the attendant misconceptions to which we may be prone because of the way our language works.⁷⁷ He distinguishes seven uses (while acknowledging that there are even more): a perceptual use (when I feel a watch in my pocket or feel that something is cold; an explanatory use - just as I may peer but not see, I may feel but not succeed (I may feel for a pulse but not detect it - this usage is obviously connected with the first)); a 'mock' use as when the condemned man already 'feels' the rope around his neck; a use which points to such physical discomforts as tickles and aches; a use which is followed by a general condition, e.g. I feel sleepy, uneasy, tense; a common usage when we speak of feeling that something is the case; an idiomatic use in which we speak of feeling like doing something.

Ryle suggests that, in the face of these different uses of 'feeling', there are two theoretical tendencies. One is to assimilate all the other uses to just one: "we hanker to make the word 'feeling' stand for a homogeneous something"⁷⁸, so that we incline to assume all the uses of 'feel' are like 'feel a pain or tickle'. The other tendency is to suppose that it is just a linguistic accident that the same verb is used in different ways and "that English would have been a better language if it had provided seven (or more) quite different verbs".⁷⁹ Ryle's approach

77 G. Ryle, in W. Elton (ed.), *op. cit.* (1959).

78 *ibid.*, p. 61.

79 *ibid.*, p. 62.

is to suggest that neither tendency is necessarily the most helpful - although the seven cited uses of 'feel' are not members of one family they do have traceable genealogical connexions.

The rest of the article demonstrates various connexions and it will not be necessary to summarise them all but merely to identify those which have most relevance to the feeling content in drama.

Ryle's discussion also gives an account of why feeling tends to be seen as something private and inner to which the individual has "privileged access". This traditional approach to the language of emotion has already been discussed and the following may appear to be going over familiar ground but Ryle's account offers an explanation of why the traditional view exercises the influence it does. We do, he suggests, have "a sort of (graduatedly) privileged access to such things as palpitations of the heart, cramps, and creaks in the joints"⁸⁰, and what happens is that there is a slide from one use of feeling to another. Reid makes a similar point when he says that when we give an account of what we feel we attend to the content of what is going on within the organism and this tends to influence our account of what feeling is. We attend to the inner life of feeling and thereby perform, "an artificial if necessary abstraction" which fails to recognise that feeling shares in the objectively directed character of our cognitive-conative relationship with the world.⁸¹

80 G. Ryle, in W. Elton (ed.), *op. cit.* (1959), p. 62.

81 L. Reid, *op. cit.* (1969), p. 144.

To say that feeling is not to be thought of as an inner process is similar to Wittgenstein's directive that we should not think of understanding as a mental process.⁸² Understanding is a mental process, feeling is obviously part of our inner life but the point he is making is that it may be misleading to think of understanding and feeling in that way because we tend to see them as occult, mysterious, inner processes or turmoils which makes it difficult for us to talk about feeling, particularly in the context of education.

"What is internal is hidden from us - the future is hidden from us ... But does the astronomer think like this when he calculates an eclipse of the sun?"⁸³

In Midgley's discussion of anthropomorphism she argues against the reluctance of students of animal behaviour who disclaim any right to talk about the subjective feelings of animals. Her argument is that they should consider whether they have any right to talk about the subjective feelings of adults for the position is very similar. She comments,

"In no case can we be anybody but ourselves. We cannot 'get inside' someone else - we genuinely do not know what the exact quality of the feeling accompanying his actions is like, and would doubtless be astonished if it could somehow be conveyed to us."⁸⁴

She goes on to say, however, that knowing what somebody else's feeling or motive is does not demand this,

82 L. Wittgenstein, Philosophical Investigations (Basil Blackwell, 1953), p. 61e.

83 *ibid.*, p. 223e.

84 M. Midgley, *op. cit.* (1979), p. 345.

"... fear, greed and the like are not just feelings, sensations. They are attitudes ... Saying that somebody has a feeling is not claiming a hot line to his private experience; it is finding a pattern in his life."⁸⁵

The view of feeling which sees it as an essential part of a total participation in the world makes it easier to see how feeling has an important role in knowing. Ryle's seventh use of 'feeling' was the sense of 'feeling that' and the question can be raised as to how much importance is given to that sort of usage. Some philosophers have taken the phrase to be equivalent to 'believe that ...':

"For the sake of semantic clarity it would be preferable not to use the word feeling in this sense at all. Instead of saying 'I feel that people are persecuting me' say 'I believe that people are persecuting me' and then judge by the evidence as best you can whether this is true."⁸⁶

There is a danger here that linguistic analysis may disinfect our language too much and may miss an important fact about our sentient lives, about the way we participate as subjective beings within the world. In contrast to this approach Reid comments,

"May not sensitive feeling be a positive asset in knowing or otherwise coming to terms with the world? ... There does seem to be a sense in which to 'feel' the structures of things and their values is a way in which we positively come to know more of them."⁸⁷

85 M. Midgley, *op. cit.* (1979), p. 345.

86 J. Hospers, An Introduction to Philosophical Analysis (Routledge, 1956), p. 125.

87 L. Reid, *op. cit.* (1969), p. 146.

At this stage it will be worth making reference to an earlier discussion of learning. A distinction was there made between the intention to learn and unintentional learning in order to highlight the important fact that in drama a form of learning takes place which includes a prominent tacit element and does not require that the pupils 'set about' learning. It was suggested that attempts to restrict the concept of learning by including intention and specifying the learning in propositions are likely to distort this aspect of the subject. Content can be given to the notion of teaching by considering the various strategies employed by the teacher to develop understanding. The use of 'feeling that' which has been identified here can be seen to embrace the tacit element which extends beyond the restricted view of the propositional formulation 'know that x ...' To know and feel that x adds a significant dimension which our ordinary language recognises. The concentration on understanding as an objective for drama is to focus on understanding at a deep level of feeling because of the nature of the context in which the understanding takes place.

The importance of feeling for understanding is graphically illustrated by Donaldson's book Children's Minds.⁸⁸ She describes a number of experiments which provide a challenge to Piagetian assumptions about the intellectual capacity of young children because they performed better when tests were altered,

88 M. Donaldson, Children's Minds (Fontana, 1978).

although the formal thought process being tested remained the same. The common factor which runs through the description of the nature of the alterations was to place the test in a context of feeling, intentions, motivations.

One of the tests, designed to test powers of decentration, involves the child describing what another observer would see if he were looking at the same object (a model of three mountains) from another point of view. The performance was considerably improved when a second test was devised which asked the children to think about what a policeman would be able to see if he were searching for a naughty boy. In this experiment the child was asked to place a model of a boy in such a position in a series of intersecting model walls that the policeman would not be able to see him. Why was the task so easy for the children in the second example? Donaldson accounts for the success as follows:

"Notice that we cannot appeal to direct actual experience: few, if any, of these children had ever tried to hide from a policeman. But we can appeal to the generalization of experience: they know what it is to try to hide. Also they know what it is to be naughty and to want to evade the consequences. So they can easily conceive that a boy might want to hide from a policeman if he had been a bad boy; for in this case it would be the job of the policeman to catch him and the consequences of being caught would be undesirable."⁸⁹

She goes on to suggest that the motives and intention of the characters are easily understood even by a child of three. The language of the experiments and the task itself is less likely

89 M. Donaldson, op. cit. (1978), p. 24.

to be a source of confusion to the child if they are not removed from familiar human feelings, purposes and goals. The new task requires the child to act in ways which are in line with basic human interactions and makes human sense because it occurs within a context of interpersonal motives. When the task is in a context which takes account of human intentions and feeling the child's performance improves.

Understanding in drama is embedded in a feeling context which although drawing on the child's past experience, projects him into new situations. The very nature of the feeling in drama which is both 'real' and 'unreal' provides the appropriate context for learning. This paradoxical comment needs explanation which will be given in the following discussion of drama as art.

Throughout this study reference has been made to the contrasting views of 'drama for learning' and 'drama as art' and the lack of clarity which tends to permeate discussions of this issue. There has also been considerable reference to aesthetics already but it will be important at this stage to look specifically at the notion of 'drama as art'. The first point to be made is that the very question, 'is drama in education to be viewed as art?', can easily assume that there exists a clear idea of what art is, whereas aesthetic theory tells us that this is by no means the case. The question, 'what is art?' itself needs analysis: is it a request for a definition, for necessary and sufficient conditions or for a less rigid account of unifying principles?

The tendency in aesthetics associated with the influence of Wittgenstein was to question attempts to offer definitions of art. Gallie has taken this approach in his attempts to uncover the essentialist fallacy (the search for conceptual essences in terms of necessary and sufficient conditions) and his arguments lead him to question "what reasons have we for thinking that the word Art stands for some one thing".⁹⁰

The same approach was taken by Weitz in his article, "The Role of Theory in Aesthetics", in which he pleads for a rejection of the question "what is the nature of art?"⁹¹ He suggests that formalist, emotionalist and intuitionist theories are all inadequate in their various ways. His recommended approach is not to eschew the various theories but to see them as "serious and argued-for recommendations to concentrate on certain criteria of excellence".⁹²

Both these approaches rightly reject attempts to give narrow definitions of art but this does not mean that aesthetics should be confined to an investigation of the language used in art and art criticism. This point is made by Findlay in his criticism of philosophical approaches to aesthetics which operate purely in

90 W.B. Gallie, "The Function of Philosophical Aesthetics", in W. Elton (ed.), op. cit. (1959), p. 16.

91 M. Weitz, "The Role of Theory in Aesthetics", The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism (Vol. xv, No. 1, September 1956, pp. 27-35), reprinted in M. Weitz, op. cit. (1959), p. 146.

92 *ibid.*, p. 156.

terms of investigations of language, which although immensely valuable are philosophically unsatisfactory "because they fail to subordinate the rich material they have garnered to truly illuminating, directive concepts".⁹³ The key notion of a "directive concept" is clearly distinct from a strict definition as is illustrated in the following:

"It is not enough for a philosopher, like a battery hen, to scabble about among variety, and to pick out from it any and every chunky concept he happens to find there. Concepts must be found which gather details into unity, which cover a series of cases graded by genuine and deep affinities, which hit upon a real mutual belongingness of features which is in our data and not arbitrarily imposed by ourselves, and it must be the sort of concept which is naturally extensible or stretchable, which can be broadened to cover new cases or features, which shifts while remaining the same in the sense in which 'being the same' is of interest for philosophy."⁹⁴

Findlay goes on to make the telling point that Wittgenstein's concept of family resemblance which dominates so much linguistic philosophy and which illuminates so many features of ordinary speech is not itself a family-resemblance concept.

The question 'is drama in education to be viewed as art?' is to be viewed not as a matter of attempting to match definitions but as a process of looking for affinities, for common approaches between the practice of drama in education and explanations of art given by philosophers. A further distinction, however, needs

93 J.N. Findlay, "The Perspicuous and the Poignant: Two Aesthetic Fundamentals", The British Journal of Aesthetics (71, January 1967), reprinted in H. Osborne (ed.), op. cit. (1972), p. 94.

94 *ibid.*, p. 93.

to be made between drama as art and drama as aesthetic experience. Discussions tend to concentrate on 'drama as art' but a different emphasis is placed if attention is directed to aesthetic experience. For whereas 'drama as art' can easily tend towards asking whether the drama is itself an art form (meaning 'are the pupils creating art?'), to ask whether the pupils are engaged in aesthetic experience is different and may raise different questions.

It has been suggested that the most helpful way of explaining the emotional content of the drama is to view the participants as percipients. One of the advantages of seeing the participants in this way is that it more easily recognises the fact that the feeling which belongs to the drama experience can be a collective experience associated with the drama as a whole. Most discussions of emotion in drama concentrate on the emotions experienced by the characters in the role they have adopted but it is important to recognise that a moment of deep feeling in drama may be a shared feeling. The moment when a central character dies may be shared alike by all the participants in the same way, including those who were responsible in the drama for his death.

If we follow the line of concentrating on the experience of the drama rather than the experience of the creation of the drama (the two are present simultaneously), it might be expected then that those philosophers who have given accounts of aesthetic experience in a Kantian tradition have most relevance to the present discussion. Kant's contribution to aesthetics was to take over the notion of a specifically 'aesthetic' attitude and give it

a logical basis. Aesthetic judgements form a class of their own:

"The judgement of taste, therefore, is not logical, but is aesthetic - which means that it is one whose determining ground cannot be other than subjective..."⁹⁵

and elsewhere,

"... we shall call that which must always remain purely subjective, and is absolutely incapable of forming a representation of an object, by the familiar name of feeling."⁹⁶

It will not be necessary to expand on the intricacies of Kant's aesthetic theory but to say that an approach in this tradition which concentrates in the first instance on the phenomenology of aesthetic experience is likely to have most relevance for drama, because it is the experience of the participants in which we are most interested.

Findlay has adopted this approach to aesthetics in his article, "The Perspicuous and the Poignant". He follows Brentano who categorised the attitudes of the conscious mind and suggests that,

"the aesthetic field is one of suspended conception, of pure having something before one for contemplation: it is a field essentially divorced from the Yes-No of belief and conviction, as it is divorced from the other Yes-No of practical concern with its necessary involvement in reality."⁹⁷

95 I. Kant, The Critique of Judgement, translated by J.C. Meredith (Oxford University Press, 1928), p. 41.

96 *ibid.*, p. 45.

97 J.N. Findlay, in H. Osborne (ed.), *op. cit.* (1972), p. 93.

Recent writing in drama has tended to draw attention to the fact that the participants are consciously aware of the drama as make-believe in contrast to seeing the most successful drama operating when there is a total illusion of reality. (This tendency was discussed in more detail elsewhere). Thus Heathcote, comparing actors and children in drama comments,

"Both kinds of people know they are not actually living through the events they have activated. That is, they both share in art."⁹⁸

But, of course, it is not enough to see this freedom from conviction and belief as a criterion of aesthetic experience. In fact some form of conviction and belief may be said to be prerequisites of the drama but on a different plane. An important aspect of the way drama operates is that it selects and therefore concentrates the attention of the participants. What is presented to consciousness moves in "restricted orbit" - this is how Findlay describes the aspect of aesthetic experience he calls perspicuity. By this term he does not mean mere lucidity but he wants to draw attention to the fact that impediments to consciousness of the art object disappear. In a drama the participants are freed from the consequences of their decisions and they are freed also from the normal distractions and clutter which characterise our experience in the world. An engagement in drama can be described as a process of bracketing whereby extraneous features of a situation are removed in order to explore a topic

98 D. Heathcote, "Material for Meaning", London Drama (Vol. 6, No. 2, Spring 1980), p. 6.

in depth. A play about being lost in the desert may be primarily a play which explores trust in leadership because the participants are not lost in a desert.

Much drama is highly representative so that the nature of its departure from the real is often not adequately recognised. Photography is sometimes quoted as an extreme example of representation but consider the difference between looking at a street scene and looking at an equivalent photograph. The very fact that a human agent has intervened and has selected and isolated a particular moment carries to us an implicit message that at the least says, 'this was worth looking at'. There is also a suspension of time, a moment which would have passed us by is held before us so that we can take in more of the detail than if we had been there. The isolation and selection allow us to penetrate the subject more deeply. The form isolates and displays - this is all before we even begin to talk about the effect of such formal elements as light, texture, contrast.

It is often said that drama operates in time but it is equally important to recognise drama's ability to suspend time. A particular incident can be retraced and explored from someone else's point of view. Events which would take place simultaneously can be explored separately. Drama allows the opportunity to say, 'Suppose this had happened, what then ...?'

These aspects of drama are aspects of the aesthetic experience but perhaps the most important ingredient is the feeling content

described by Findlay as poignancy. In recent years drama exponents and teachers have been aware of the importance of the quality of the experience for the participants within the drama: words like 'depth' and 'significance' are common in descriptions of drama lessons in a way that was not the case twenty years ago. This concern and search for depth which characterises much work can be seen as a search for aesthetic experience.

In the discussion of meaning it was argued that the notion of aesthetic meaning does not interpret the meaning of the drama in terms of mere content or external form but reflects the fact that drama operates by virtue of an integration of those factors which contribute to the meaning. This view was to place emphasis on the intentional, imaginative consciousness of the participants, on their experience. Thus form and feeling are linked in the experience of the participants. The depth of feeling has to do with the degree to which the material of the drama is absorbed into the subjective life of the participants. The two elements of perspicuity and poignancy described by Findlay present two aspects of the one experience which influence each other.

"There has, we may note, been something artificial in my distinction between perspicuity and poignancy; they are simply two sides of the suspended consideration from which belief and practice are put at a distance. Perspicuity stresses the relation of such considerations to its object, the impartial truth or fullness with which that object is, in its relevant traits, presented or given. Poignancy, on the other hand, stresses the relation of such considerations to the subject, the intensity with which it sustains itself in our subjective life."⁹⁹

99 J.N. Findlay, in H. Osborne (ed.), op. cit. (1972), p. 102.

This attempt to give some account of aesthetic experience in drama may be helped by describing an experience which is not justifiably given this title. In the absence of clear cut distinctions it is a question of indicating more what are the opposing tendencies. Teachers commonly refer to drama which does not have depth as being 'only play'. The implications of this for learning were discussed elsewhere but it will be useful to consider the relevance of this view to the notion of drama as aesthetic experience. In order to make a satisfactory comparison, a phenomenological account of play of the kind given by Heaton will be useful:

"In play there is a to-and-fro movement which is not tied to any goal which would bring it to an end."

(Many of the constraints of form which also contribute to the feeling of the drama are absent from play).

"It is a movement which renews itself in constant repetition. The play is the performance of the movement as such. It is nothing to do with the attitude of a subject who must take up a playful attitude to an object 'play' in order that playing can occur."

(This is true of make-believe play and is in contrast to the important attitude described above which characterises aesthetic experience).

"In play there is a suspension of belief and non-belief. You cannot really say if a child believes his dolls are babies or not - to him there is no conceptual distinction between being and playing. Hence there is a primacy of play over the consciousness of the player. It happens as it were by itself."

(Again, this distinction rings true. The drama does not have the same supremacy over the participants - consider the difference between make-believe play of cowboys and indians and the conscious attempt to create a drama on the same theme).

"The game absorbs the player into itself and this takes from him the burden of initiative - thus the ease of play when we are playing well."

(In drama the 'burden of initiative' is an essential ingredient - not that the participants experience that burden in a negative way but the drama requires creative concentration and effort).¹⁰⁰

It is generally recognised that it is the teacher's responsibility to move the experience away from play towards drama. Earlier it was argued that this process is more usefully described as 'an engagement of the consciousness of the participants'. From this discussion of feeling it can be seen that to engage the pupils in the way described is exactly to deepen the feeling - it is simply a matter of giving the process a different description. But the value of describing the process in this way is that it avoids the implication that the teacher sets out to work directly on something called 'feeling' either in terms of setting a sensible problem or telling the pupils to feel one way or another. The teacher engages the pupils in a situation in which the appropriate feeling will arise with the successful consummation of the drama. It is in this sense that feeling, important as it is, is more usefully seen as the fulfilment rather than the essence of dramatic activity.¹⁰¹

100 J.N. Heaton, "Ontology and Play", in B. Curtis and W. Mays (eds), Phenomenology and Education (Methuen, 1978), p. 124.

101 Terminology used by Findlay with reference to aesthetic experience. J.N. Findlay, in H. Osborne (ed.), *op. cit.* (1972), p. 100.

CONCLUSION

I now propose to summarise the major conclusions of this thesis. They can be listed under the following headings which can now be seen as major concerns running through the entire study.

- (a) Clarification of concepts in drama which have caused confusion.
- (b) Philosophical underpinning of current theory and practice of drama in education.
- (c) New perspective on changes in drama in education.
- (d) Justification of drama as aesthetic education.
- (e) Demonstration of the importance of philosophy for drama in education and subjects in general.

Each of these areas will be discussed in turn.

(a) Clarification of concepts

Chapter Two identified the important concepts: aims, learning, meaning, feeling with which the study would be concerned. Chapter Three argued for the importance of aims when viewed not as terminal goals but as a means of identifying the relationship between agent, activity and goal (p. 89) and as an indication of the broad rationale motivating the teacher's work. The importance of distinguishing aims from the values and functions of drama was stressed.

Chapter Four discussed difficulties of making conceptual distinctions between learning and concepts like development and growth, and suggested that there are problems with the notion of 'drama for learning' or 'drama for understanding'. One solution might be to restrict the concept of learning by including intention and specifying the learning in propositions, but such a move distorts the nature of the subject. A view of learning was recommended which sees learning not as an action in the fully intentional sense but stressed the passive side (p. 130). By emphasising teaching it was suggested that some of the conceptual problems can be avoided. A recommendation was made on the importance and means of giving content to the notion of teaching, thus avoiding the route back to extreme child-centred approaches (p. 158).

Chapter Five looked at problems which have centred on the concept of meaning. It was suggested that some of these problems have arisen because of the multifarious use of the term. Some uses of 'meaning' by drama exponents seem to imply an acceptance of forms of dualism. Here the philosophical tendency to solve problems by circumscribing uses of 'meaning' was resisted. Instead, a directive, unifying concept of aesthetic meaning was recommended which allows various uses of 'meaning' but does not make the mistake of assuming that the meaning of drama is defined in terms of one of its constituents. Even the common view that form and content constitute the aesthetic meaning is correct only if an adequate view of form is given. The importance of the

consciousness of the participants as part of the aesthetic meaning of the drama was stressed. Chapter Six argued that a traditional view of the way we use emotion words (criticised by philosophers) still pervades thinking and writing about drama. If emotion words are viewed not as simply referring to inner turbulences but to a total participation in a context, some of the conceptual problems are dissolved. There are also implications here for practice; for example, the invitation to pupils to give a particular emotional display can be linked to implicit philosophical misconceptions (p. 251). Problems associated with the concept of expression were also discussed and again can be seen to be derived from traditional views of the way emotion words operate in our language.

(b) Philosophical underpinning

In recommending the above clarification, this thesis has drawn from a number of writers, particularly contemporary philosophers who apply themselves specifically to educational questions. Although this study has avoided formulating theory and has not attempted to do so for reasons identified in Chapter One, various writers have been used to support the implicit theory and practice of drama exponents.

Chapter Three on aims made reference to writers like Pring and Sockett who have criticised a simplistic means/end model when it comes to specifying aims and objectives. Chapter Four on learning compared approaches to education taken by Hirst and Elliott and suggested that the latter's view of mental development

and concept of 'common understanding' provides theoretical support for drama. Writers who stress a tacit dimension in learning like Polanyi, Dunlop, Oakeshott, were also enlisted to support the views of drama exponents. Chapter Five on meaning argued that Reid's concept of aesthetic meaning and Greger's concept of 'unpacking' could be adapted to apply to drama practice. The importance of adapting aesthetic theory to drama was stressed; a warning note was sounded against the indiscriminate application of aesthetics to drama in education without taking into account the nature of the subject. Chapter Six on feeling linked philosophical criticisms of a traditional view of emotion (by writers like Ryle, Jones, Mounce, Pitcher and Bedford) to approaches to emotion taken by drama exponents, in order to give theoretical substance to the latter's intuitive approaches. The overall view of aesthetics related Elliott's challenge to objectivist aesthetics and Findlay's analysis of aesthetic experience to drama.

(c) Developments in drama in education

In the course of this study I have criticised some attempts to describe developments in the subject (e.g. from 'growth' to 'learning'; from 'self-expression' to 'structure'; from 'drama as theatre and text' to 'drama as play') as being too simplistic. In attempting a brief summary of the perspective of the development of drama given in this thesis, there is the danger of likewise oversimplifying the issues. What follows, therefore, should be taken as a very broad outline which omits the finer distinctions made in the study.

Most commentators would agree that there is clearly a greater stress in contemporary practice in drama on the role of the teacher. It is not enough, however, to say that the teacher is now more active for it is important to identify that nature of his role. It was suggested that the teacher can be seen to have a major role in influencing the quality of the experience of the participants (described here as an engagement of consciousness) while at the same time having a key role in teaching, in developing understanding of the participants in drama. The important notion of 'teaching form' revealed the complexities involved in the concept of teaching for it is not simply a question of drawing conscious attention to form. Form is relevant to meaning and learning by a process of tacit integration in the consciousness of the participants which in turn makes form an essential component of feeling. Successful drama teachers know when to draw conscious attention of the participants to aspects of form and content and when to leave these as a tacit part of the process.

The strict division between drama and theatre which existed for a time arose partly because of a superficial view of the development of the subject. Exponents described themselves as anti-theatre partly to break with earlier practices. An examination of implicit concepts of education reveals changes which do not force such strict dichotomies.

There have been important developments in the theory and practice of the subject which, as suggested in the introduction, are often ignored by writers in drama. It is fair to say that

contemporary exponents because they attend to quality of experience are closer to seeking aesthetic experience as an important goal than exponents of the past. Although there has been this significant development in the subject, I do not agree with the tendency to devalue or even deride earlier practices. It is wrong, for example, to dismiss Slade's self-expression approach as being of no value. The contradictions involved in doing so were pointed out in Chapters Three and Four.

(d) Justification of drama as aesthetic education

I have viewed this thesis more as offering clarification of some of the issues in the field rather than as intending to offer new ways of justifying the subject. In this the philosophical task can be seen as a process of making explicit what is implicit in the theory and practice of drama in education. However, the dividing line between what is on the one hand a process of making explicit what is implicit, and on the other hand offering new insights is fine. To see drama as aesthetic education is not new, but I suggest what has emerged is a means of making that view more theoretically coherent and extending the scope of what aesthetic education means in the context of drama. It was suggested that a coherent picture emerges if the participants are viewed as percipients in terms of the feeling content of the drama, that some of the conceptual problems are thereby avoided. It was also argued that creative engagement in drama can be viewed in part as a means of educating aesthetic response to art. This latter view relied on

a rejection of purely objectivist views of aesthetics. It was argued that form has to be seen as an integral part of the human expression and thus of the feeling which in turn is to be viewed as the culmination rather than the essence of drama. The justification of drama as aesthetic education can now be seen as an important concern of the entire thesis. Although the chapters on aims and learning did not deal with aesthetics, they provided the important framework for the subsequent discussion in Meaning and Feeling.

(e) Importance of philosophy for drama in education and subjects in general

In the discussion of philosophy and drama in Chapter One, the idea of attempting to establish a model for the application of philosophy to subjects was rejected. By focussing the investigation on the problems which arise in the teaching of subjects, the aimless pursuit of concepts which has characterised much philosophy of education in the past is avoided. The role of philosopher in this case is not to be seen as one who from a neutral position outside the field investigates the logic of argument and status of concepts but one who writes from inside the subject, sharing the real concerns, confusions and problems which arise. In the course of this study the limitations of a view of the role of philosophy purely as linguistic analysis has been demonstrated, particularly in rejecting simplistic defining characteristics of concepts like teaching, learning and meaning. Instead, there has

been an acceptance of the movement in philosophy of education as a whole towards a wider and more significant role for philosophy. I have attempted in this thesis to demonstrate the importance of philosophy for drama and by implication for subjects in general.

In the introduction reference was made to the rapid growth of the subject in recent years. While engaged in this study, I have been particularly conscious of that fact; many of the major writings on drama discussed here have been published during the research and writing of this thesis. Keeping pace with developments has been exciting and challenging. The process of the development of the subject continues. At the stage of putting the final touches to my own work, I received Robinson's thesis, "A Re-evaluation of the Roles and Functions of Drama in the Secondary School".¹ Although I have taken issue with the details of some of Robinson's arguments as outlined in other publications by him, his thesis confirms the claim made in my introduction that the subject has been taken to sophisticated levels. What Robinson and many other contemporary writers in drama in education share is a refusal to oversimplify, a refusal to reduce education to a process of simple formulae and naive solutions and a determination to give a theoretical basis to good practice in the subject.

This refusal to oversimplify is particularly pertinent at the present time when a process of retrenchment in education is

1 K. Robinson, "A Re-evaluation of the Roles and Functions of Drama in Secondary Education with reference to a survey of curricular drama in 259 secondary schools" (Ph.D. thesis, University of London Institute of Education, 1981).

accompanied by an even more worrying tendency to see education in simple terms and to translate a naive vision into oversimplified solutions at a practical level. When I first became involved with the subject some years ago, I was impressed by the intuitive grasp of the subtleties and complexities involved in the process of teaching demonstrated by drama practitioners. I think it is fair to say that even ten years ago those intuitions remained largely a tacit part of the process and were rarely clearly articulated. There have been encouraging signs in the publications of the last few years that exponents are finding ways of making those intuitions explicit and giving them a theoretical foundation. This thesis has intended to contribute to that process.

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