Dialogic Inquiry: Towards a Socio-cultural Practice and Theory of Education (Learning in Doing: Social, Cognitive and Computational Perspectives)

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For more than a quarter century, the polemics surrounding educational reform have centered on two points of view: those that favor a "progressive" child-centered form of education, and those that would prefer a return to a more structured, teacher-directed curriculum that emphasizes basic knowledge and skills. Vygotsky's social constructivist theory offers an alternative solution, placing stress on coconstruction of knowledge by more and less mature participants engaging in joint activity. This theory offers semiotic mediation as the primary means of obtaining knowledge, whereby the less mature participants can seek solutions to everyday problems by using resources existing in society. In addition to using illustrative examples from classroom studies, this book provides a comparative analysis of the theories and complementary developments in works by Vygotsky and the linguist M.A.K. Halliday. This unique volume will be of tremendous benefit to researchers in the fields of education, sociolinguistics, and psychology.

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