

DIALOGIC TEACHING AND THE STUDY OF CLASSROOM TALK

A DEVELOPMENTAL BIBLIOGRAPHY

Robin Alexander
University of Cambridge

This bibliography puts in more or less chronological order Robin Alexander's publications to date on spoken language and dialogue in learning, teaching and education. It starts with observational and discourse studies undertaken in the UK during the 1980s and early 1990s. Then follows the *Culture and Pedagogy* international study out of which Alexander's approach to dialogic teaching partly developed. Successive editions of *Towards Dialogic Teaching* tracked the development of the approach in detail, and *Essays on Pedagogy* extended the dialogic principle into wider aspects of education while reasserting the importance of an international perspective. Next come miscellaneous papers; evaluation reports from dialogic teaching development projects in UK schools during the early 2000s; the 2010 final report of the Cambridge Primary Review, which like *Essays on Pedagogy* gives dialogue prominence not only in pedagogy but also among education's guiding aims; and the 2012 paper for the Department for Education (DfE) that persuaded the UK government to take spoken language more seriously in its framework for the 2014 revised national curriculum for England. The bibliography's later entries relate to the 2014-17 randomised control trial sponsored by the Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) that demonstrated the efficacy of Alexander's approach to dialogic teaching; a paper re-positioning dialogue and argumentation for the era of 'post-truth' politics; Alexander's evidence to the 2020 Oracy All-Party Parliamentary Group; and *A Dialogic Teaching Companion*, his summation to date of 25 years of work in this area together with a completely revised version of his frameworks for dialogic teaching and professional development.

Talk for learning and teaching is just one aspect of Robin Alexander's research from the past 40 years or so, and the publications listed here are part of a larger corpus of over 320 which includes work on many other aspects of education both inside and outside the UK. This breadth of focus underlines his claim that classroom talk cannot properly be handled in isolation from curriculum and wider aspects of pedagogy, or without engaging with the culture and history that shape educational policy, school ethos, teachers' assumptions and of course language itself.

Classroom interaction in British classrooms (late 1980s/early 1990s)

These studies from the PRINDEP and CICADA research projects (funded respectively by Leeds City Council and ESRC) include (i) quantitative analysis of classroom interaction, (ii) electronic analysis of coded discourse transcripts and (iii) qualitative analysis of lesson transcripts. Together they confirm and analyse in British settings the recitation/IRE default identified during the 1960s/70s by Barnes and Britton in the UK and Cazden and Mehan in the US (plus less frequently documented variants such as pseudo-enquiry), and they begin to point the way to alternatives.

Alexander, R.J. and Willcocks, J. (1990) *Teachers and Children in PNP Classrooms*. Interim Report 11 from the Primary Needs Evaluation Project. Leeds: University of Leeds.

Alexander, R.J. (1995) *Versions of Primary Education*. Routledge, chapters 4, 5 and 6.
<http://www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415128384/>

Alexander R.J., Willcocks, J., Nelson, N. (1996) Discourse, pedagogy and the National Curriculum: change and continuity in primary schools. *Research Papers in Education*, 11:1, 83-122.

Dialogic teaching: the key texts

Culture and Pedagogy was a large-scale macro-micro comparative study, funded by the Leverhulme Trust, of culture, policy and pedagogy in England, France, India, Russia and the United States. The book culminates in quantitative and qualitative cross-cultural analysis of classroom talk which includes transcribed extracts from videotaped lessons in each country. The analysis covers both linguistic and paralinguistic aspects of classroom talk, and relates what is said by children and teachers to the pedagogy and culture that shape it. This analysis influenced the author's approach to dialogic teaching and in *Towards Dialogic Teaching* he set out research foundations, justifications, repertoires, principles and indicators, progressively refined in four subsequent editions. *Essays on Pedagogy* extends dialogism into wider aspects of pedagogy and education, as a stance as much as a strategy. *Developing Dialogue* demonstrates the impact of dialogic teaching on student engagement and attainment through the Education Endowment Foundation's independent randomised control trial (RCT). From March 2020 *A Dialogic Teaching Companion* replaced *Towards Dialogic Teaching* as the core text, delving much more deeply and taking account of the RCT and other recent research.

Alexander, R.J. (2001) *Culture and Pedagogy*. Blackwell, especially chapters 15 and 16, 391-528
<http://eu.wiley.com/WileyCDA/WileyTitle/productCd-0631220518,descCd-reviews.html>

Alexander, R.J. (2008) *Essays on Pedagogy*. Routledge, chapters 4, 5, 6 and 7, pp 72-172, and appendix, 184-191.
<http://www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415454834/>

Alexander, R.J. (2017) *Towards Dialogic Teaching: rethinking classroom talk* (5th edition of text first published in 2004 and from March 2020 superseded by *A Dialogic Teaching Companion*, below). Dialogos. http://www.robinalexander.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/TDT_Order_Form_2017.pdf

Alexander, R.J. (2018) Developing dialogue: genesis, process, trial, *Research Papers in Education* 33(5), 361-398.
<https://www.robinalexander.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/RPIE-2018-Alexander-dialogic-teaching.pdf>

Alexander, R.J. (2020) *A Dialogic Teaching Companion*. Routledge. <https://www.routledge.com/A-Dialogic-Teaching-Companion/Alexander/p/book/9781138570351>

Reports on early school-based dialogic teaching initiatives

Alexander, R.J. (2003) *Talk for Learning: the first year*. Northallerton: North Yorkshire County Council.
<http://www.robinalexander.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/North-Yorks-report-03.pdf>

Alexander, R.J. (2005) *Talk for Learning: the second year*, Northallerton: North Yorkshire County Council.
<http://www.robinalexander.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/North-Yorks-report-04.pdf>

Alexander, R.J. (2005) *Teaching Through Dialogue: the first year*, London: Barking and Dagenham Council.
<http://www.robinalexander.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Bardagelea-eval-report-05.pdf>

Miscellaneous articles, chapters and monographs

Alexander R.J. (1996) Task, time, talk and text: signposts to effective teaching? In NCERT (ed) *School Effectiveness and Learning Achievement at the Primary Stage: International Perspectives*, pp 78-106. New Delhi: NCERT.

Alexander R.J. (1997) Unfinished journey: pedagogy and discourse in school effectiveness research. In Kumar, K. (ed) *Studies on Classroom Processes and School Effectiveness at the Primary Stage*, pp 3-26. New Delhi: NCERT.

Alexander, R.J. (2001) Lessons for the chattering classes, *Times Educational Supplement*, 23 February.
<https://www.tes.com/news/tes-archive/tes-publication/lessons-chattering-classes>

Alexander, R.J. (2001) In any language, it's good to talk, *Times Educational Supplement*, 19 January.
<http://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=342696>

Alexander, R.J. (2003), Talk in teaching and learning: international perspectives, in QCA (ed) *New Perspectives on Spoken English*, QCA, 26-37.

Alexander, R.J. (2003) Oracy, literacy and pedagogy: international perspectives, in Bearne, E., Dombey, H., Grainger, T. (ed) *Interactions in Language and Literacy in the Classroom*, Open University Press, 23-35.

Alexander, R.J. (2004) Talking to learn, *Times Educational Supplement*, 6 March.
<http://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=389939>

Alexander, R.J. (2005) Talking to learn: oracy revisited, in Conner, C. (ed) *Teaching Texts*, Nottingham: National College for School Leadership, 75-93.

Alexander, R.J., (2005) (in Hebrew, translated by Nadav Segal) *Education, culture and cognition: intervening for growth*. Jerusalem: Avnei Roshna Resource Centre. <http://www.avneyrosha.org.il/resourcecenter/Pages/90.aspx>

Alexander, R.J. (2006) The people's voice, *Times Educational Supplement*, 9 June.
<http://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=2250681>

Alexander, R.J. (2006) *Education as Dialogue: moral and pedagogical choices for a runaway world*, Hong Kong Institute of Education / Dialogos.

Wolfe, S. and Alexander, R.J. (2008) *Argumentation and dialogic teaching: alternative pedagogies for a changing world*, 18 pp, London: Futurelab.
<http://www.robinalexander.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/wolfealexander.pdf>

Alexander, R.J. (2008) Culture, dialogue and learning: notes on an emerging pedagogy, in Mercer, N. and Hodgkinson, S. (ed) *Exploring Talk in School*, Sage, pp 93-114.

Alexander, R.J. (2009) De l'usage de parole en classe: une comparaison internationale, *Revue Internationale d'Éducation de Sèvres*, 50, 35-48.

<http://www.robinaalexander.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/De-l'usage-de-parole-en-classe.pdf>

Alexander, R.J. (2010) Speaking but not listening: accountable talk in an unaccountable context, (2009 UKLA International Conference keynote address), *Literacy* 44(3), 103-111.

Alexander, R.J. (2013) Improving oracy and classroom talk: achievements and challenges. *Primary First*, 10, 22-29.

Alexander, R.J. (2014) Triumphs and dilemmas of dialogue, in Lefstein, A. and Snell, J. *Better than Best Practice: developing teaching and learning through dialogue*, Routledge, 72-74.

Alexander, R.J. (2015) Dialogic pedagogy at scale: oblique perspectives, in Resnick, L., Asterhan, C. and Clarke, S. (ed) *Socialising Intelligence through Academic Talk and Dialogue*. Washington, DC: American Educational Research Association, 413-423.

Alexander, R.J. (2018) Developing Dialogue: genesis, process, trial, *Research Papers in Education* 33(5), 361-398.

<https://www.robinaalexander.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/RPIE-2018-Alexander-dialogic-teaching.pdf>

Alexander, R.J. (2019) Whose discourse? Dialogic pedagogy in a post-truth world. *Dialogic Pedagogy: An International Online Journal*, 7, 1-20. <https://dpj.pitt.edu>

Alexander, R.J. (2019) Dialogic pedagogy in a post-truth world. In Mercer, N., Wegerif, R. and Major, L. (2019) *The Routledge International Handbook of Research on Dialogic Education*. Routledge, 672-686.

Alexander, R.J. (2020) Dialogisk pædagogik i en post-sandhedsverden. In O.Dysthe, J.J.Ness and P.O.Kirkegaard Dialogisk pædagogik, kreativitet og læring. Copenhagen: Klim, 38-73.

Multimedia materials

Alexander R.J. with Lewis, J., MacBeath, J., Tite, S., Wolfe, S., (2004) *Talking to Learn* (CD forming part of the pack *Learning-Centred Leadership*), Nottingham: National College for School Leadership.

Alexander, R.J., with North Yorkshire County Council (2006) *Talk for Learning: teaching and learning through dialogue* (CD/DVD pack with 24 lesson extracts and accompanying texts). *Regrettably, this is no longer available.*

Dialogue and the Cambridge Primary Review

The Cambridge Primary Review (supported by Esmée Fairbairn Foundation) makes dialogue, pupil voice and the empowerment of both children and teachers fundamental to educational advancement, building them into aims, the curriculum, teaching and learning, assessment and professional development.

Alexander, R.J. (ed) (2010) *Children, their World, their Education: final report and recommendations of the Cambridge Primary Review*, London: Routledge. See especially chapters 7 (Children's development and learning), 10 (Children's voices), 12 (What is primary education for?), 14 (Towards a new curriculum) and 15 (Rethinking pedagogy) <http://www.routledge.com/books/details/9780415548717/>

Talk reform and national policy

Robin Alexander also addresses the challenge of raising the profile and quality of classroom talk in a country where historically it has not been treated with the seriousness it deserves, either professionally or in education policy. The 2010-13 government review of the national curriculum presented an opportunity to encourage the much-needed cultural shift, and in February 2012, in response to Alexander's representations, the Department for Education (DfE) hosted a seminar to consider the issues and how they might be addressed. The DfE response to a Freedom of Information request revealed that his keynote at this seminar (below) persuaded the government to give spoken language a more prominent place than was its initial inclination.

In 2019 an All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG) launched an enquiry into the condition and improvement of oracy in England' schools. Alexander's written submission to the enquiry is linked below.

Alexander, R.J. (2012) *Improving Oracy and Classroom Talk in English Schools: achievements and challenges*. <http://www.robinaalexander.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/DfE-oracy-120220-Alexander-FINAL.pdf>.

Alexander, R.J. (2020) *All Party Parliamentary Group on Oracy: submission from Professor Robin Alexander, University of Cambridge*

<http://robinaalexander.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/APPG-Oracy-submission.pdf>

Classroom talk, social disadvantage and educational attainment

The 2014-17 joint project of the Cambridge Primary Review Trust and the University of York was supported by the Educational Endowment Foundation (EEF) and combined an independent randomised control trial (RCT) with in-house analysis of videodata to assess the capacity of dialogic teaching, as developed by Alexander, to increase engagement and raise educational standards among children who are socially disadvantaged. Following the trial with 5000 students in three English cities, EEF reported in 2017 that pupils whose teachers had received the dialogic teaching intervention made on average two months additional progress in tests in English, mathematics and science compared with their control group peers. These attainment gains were after an intervention lasting only 20 weeks. Further information: <http://cprtrust.org.uk/research/classroom-talk/> and <https://educationendowmentfoundation.org.uk/projects-and-evaluation/projects/dialogic-teaching>.

Alexander, R.J., Hardman, F. & Hardman, J. with Rajab, T. & Longmore, M. (2017), Changing Talk, Changing Thinking: interim report from the in-house evaluation of the CPRT/UoY Dialogic Teaching Project.

<http://www.robinalexander.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/Alexander-et-al-EEF-in-house-interim-report-final-170714.pdf>

Alexander, R.J. (2018) Developing Dialogue: genesis, process, trial, *Research Papers in Education* 33(5), 361-398.

<https://www.robinalexander.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/RPIE-2018-Alexander-dialogic-teaching.pdf>