

Summarised by Lou Taylor

### Talk moves

- ‘Revoicing’ by both teacher and students. Restating ‘so you are saying...’
- Teacher initiated requests that a student repeat a previous contribution by another student. ‘Jo can you repeat what James just said’.
- Teacher elicitation of a student’s reasoning. ‘Do you agree with Becky’s suggestion? Why do you think that?’
- Teacher’s request for students to add on. ‘Does anyone have more to add to that?’
- Teacher wait time.

As teachers, we elicit responses from our students in various ways—with questions, commands, hints, jokes, and so on. When students become familiar with our inventory of phrases and expressions, they usually know what we expect of them. Although we rarely stop to think about our most common conversational prompts, they are among our most important instructional tools.

The tools include strategies—what we call “talk moves”—that support mathematical thinking, talk formats that provide different ways to organize students for conversation, and ideas for creating a classroom where respect and equal access to participation are valued norms.

#### Five Productive Talk Moves

Each move is a suggested action that we have found to be effective for making progress toward achieving our instructional goal of supporting mathematical thinking and learning.

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#### Revoicing.

##### (“So you’re saying that it’s an odd number?”)

When students talk about mathematics, it’s often very difficult to understand what they say. Even if their reasoning is sound, it may not appear sound when they try to put their thoughts into words. Sometimes it’s impossible to tell whether what they have said makes sense at all. And if you as the teacher have trouble understanding it, there’s not much hope that the student’s classmates will do any better. Yet given your goals of improving the mathematical thinking of all students, you cannot give up on an especially unclear student. If the only students whose contributions are taken seriously are those who are easy to understand, few students will ever improve. Deep thinking and powerful reasoning do not always correlate with clear verbal expression.

Therefore, teachers need a talk move that can help them deal with the inevitable lack of clarity of many student contributions. They need a tool that will allow them to interact with the student in a way that will continue to involve that student in

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clarifying his or her own reasoning. And they need a tool that will help other students continue to follow along in the face of the confusion. One such tool has been called “revoicing.” In a revoicing move, the teacher essentially tries to repeat some or all of what the student has said, and then asks the student to respond and verify whether or not the teacher’s revoicing is correct

Revoicing provides more “thinking space” and can help all students track what is going on mathematically.

### **Asking students to restate someone else’s reasoning.**

**(“Can you repeat what he just said in your own words?”)**

The teacher can also extend the move to students, by asking one student to repeat or rephrase what another student has said, and then immediately following up with the first student. This move is particularly valuable for students whose first language is not English. Second, this move provides evidence that the other students could and did hear what the first student said. This is important: if students could not or did not hear what a speaker said, they cannot easily participate in further exchanges. Finally, it yet again clarifies the claim that the first student is making and provides the first student with evidence that his thinking is being taken seriously. Over time, as students come to realize that people are listening closely to what they say, they increasingly make efforts to make their contributions comprehensible.

### **Asking students to apply their own reasoning to someone else’s reasoning.**

**(“Do you agree or disagree and why?”)**

After a student has made a claim, and the teacher has made sure that students have heard it and have had time to process it, she can move on to elicit student reasoning about the claim.

By asking a student whether she agrees or disagrees with a claim and why, the teacher is directing attention to a student’s reasoning.

### **Prompting students for further participation.**

**(“Would someone like to add on?”)**

At this point a teacher increases participation in the discussion by asking for further commentary. This prompts students to contribute to either state agreement or disagreement, or to add other comments. This prompting for more input on previous statements will, over time, result in students showing more willingness to weigh in on what the group is considering.

### **Using wait time.**

**(“Take your time . . . we’ll wait . . .”)**

The final talk move we mention in this chapter is not actually speech at all, but silence! Many teachers are familiar with the important finding that after having asked a question, a teacher should wait at least ten seconds for students to think before calling on someone for an answer. Wait time also comes into play after a

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student has been called on. After a teacher has called on a particular student, that student should be given at least the same amount of time to organize his or her thoughts. We do not use wait time consistently and patiently students will try to beat the clock and wait out the teacher. Repeating or rephrasing the question may help students give an answer rather than passing them over for someone else.

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<http://books.google.co.nz/books?id=2NX4I6mekq8C&pg=PA12&lpg=PA12&dq=talk+moves+poster&source=bl&ots=4W1GWztxm7&sig=gqB4CGUUzBzv35UjJgmn5sHI7F0&hl=en&sa=X&ei=bFtOUdyGNaayiQfTu4DAAg&ved=0CDUQ6AEwAA#v=onepage&q=talk%20moves%20poster&f=false> - Chapter 1 and Chapter 2 including teacher/student dialogue to help with understanding of how to use the above talk moves.

Purpose		
<b>Generating Ideas:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Elicit/share ideas as many as possible</li><li>Give students a sense of ownership of the discussion</li></ul>	<b>Comparing and Evaluating Ideas:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Students encouraged to talk about ideas mentioned</li><li>Teacher begins to think more about content of the discussion but open-ended discourse still encouraged</li></ul>	<b>Focusing the Range of Ideas:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Teacher narrows focus by asking students to look at one particular idea</li><li>Teacher actively concerned about content issues and takes more control of discussion</li></ul>
Talk Moves		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Revoicing</li><li>Asking students to restate someone else's reasoning</li><li>Asking students to apply their own reasoning to someone else's reasoning ("Do you agree or disagree and why?")</li><li>Prompting students for further participation ("Would someone like to add on?")</li><li>Using wait time ("Take your time... we'll wait...")</li><li>Putting ideas on hold</li><li>Pressing/probing</li></ul>		