The term ‘oracy’ was first used in 1965 by Andrew Wilkinson to refer to ‘the ability to use the oral skills of speaking and listening’ and Robin Alexander suggests the term ‘oracy’ represents the best way of referring to ‘children’s capacity to use speech to express their thoughts and communicate with others, in education and in life’.

Paul Warwick’s talk reviews the development of a set of research-informed resources for assessing the oracy skills of students aged 11-12. The Cambridge Oracy Assessment Toolkit, devised with School 21 in a project funded by the Education Endowment Fund, includes assessment tasks and procedures for use by teachers, together with a unique Skills Framework for identifying the range of skills involved in using talk in any specific social situation.

Recent research (Oracy: The State of Speaking in Our Schools, Menzies and Millard, 2016) found that oracy is undervalued and overlooked in state schools despite evidence showing its impact on student’s academic outcomes, employment opportunities, civic engagement, confidence and wellbeing.

Voice 21 aims to address this by supporting schools and teachers in enabling every child to find their voice to succeed in school and life. In this talk, Beccy Earnshaw will explore the case for giving oracy the same importance as reading and writing in schools and the consequences of sidelining speaking skills and dialogue in education. Drawing on the experience of developing an oracy based curriculum at School 21 (a 4-18 state school in Stratford East London), the findings of a recent EEF pilot and work with hundreds of teachers nationally, Beccy will share successful strategies and approaches to get talking in class.

Monday 29th January 2018
1:10-3:00pm
All seminars in this series are free to attend, and take place at UCL’s central London campus.

In partnership with: