



Disrupting the Discourse (DtD): A Dialogic Framework for Inclusive and Transformative Teaching

This framework integrates disruption, and student agency to challenge monologic, didactic, traditional learning models and fosters an inclusive, transformative educational experience.

Author

Kevin J. Brazant, SFHEA.

Founder, Lounge Akademiks™

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8457-6987>

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Student Partnership, Student Voice, Institutional Learning, Participatory Evaluation, Educational Enhancement, Qualitative Inquiry, Co-Creation, Knowledge Exchange, Practice-Based Research, Higher Education.

Abstract

This paper introduces **Disrupting the Discourse (DtD)**, a dialogic framework for inclusive and transformative teaching in higher education. Developed from an exploration of student alienation, differential student outcomes and the hidden curriculum, the framework challenges traditional, monologic approaches to teaching in which knowledge is predominantly transmitted from lecturer to student. Drawing on dialogic pedagogy, critical pedagogy, social constructivism and compassionate approaches to learning, the paper argues that inclusive teaching requires more than curriculum representation or the addition of diverse content. It requires attention to the relationships, power dynamics and conditions through which knowledge is produced, shared and valued.

The paper identifies seven principles that underpin the DtD framework: **(1) disruption as a learning tool; (2) interrogating knowledge and power structures; (3) experiential and performative learning; (4) student agency and institutional transformation; (5) a collective learning ecosystem; (6) co-creation in evaluation and assessment; and (7) employability and skills development through knowledge exchange.** Together, these principles reposition students as active participants and co-creators of knowledge, while encouraging educators to share authority, facilitate critical dialogue and connect learning to lived experience and the world beyond the classroom.

The paper subsequently translates these principles into a practical mapping and checklist tool designed to support educators in examining and developing their own teaching practice. Rather than presenting DtD as a universal solution to differential outcomes, the framework offers a structured approach through which educators and



institutions can interrogate established practices, recognise student agency and create more dialogic, critical and transformative learning environments. The paper concludes by positioning disruption not as an end in itself, but as a pedagogical means through which higher education can move from transmission towards participation, from alienation towards engagement, and from learning as consumption towards learning as a basis for critical action.

Author Note

Kevin J. Brazant is a creator of methodologies and cultural frameworks for understanding power, learning and social change. A Senior Practitioner affiliated with the London College of Communication (LCC) at the University of the Arts London (UAL). Kevin is an Encounter Artist and Cultural Systems Designer based in London, UK. He is the founder, curator and creator of the Storytelling for Justice Lab: Visualising Justice, a storytelling platform exploring how creative practice can be used to decode institutional culture, surface marginalised experiences and reimagine social justice through co-creation.

He is a researcher in disruptive pedagogies and practices ‘facilitating learning from the margins’, which foregrounds co-creation in enabling marginalised voices. He authored *‘Disrupting the Discourse: A Co-creation Framework for Centering equity in Higher Education.’* also uses storytelling, podcasting and digital content creation as part of his studio practice at Lounge Akademiks, and collaborates with companies and brands committed to social justice as part of knowledge exchange activities and consultancy.

Why this paper?

Despite decades of research into student attainment, belonging, inclusion and differential outcomes, many approaches to educational inequality continue to focus on what institutions can add to the curriculum rather than interrogating the conditions in which learning takes place. This paper argues that meaningful inclusion requires us to look beyond curriculum content and examine the relationships, power structures, pedagogical assumptions and institutional practices that can reproduce student alienation. **Disrupting the Discourse (DtD)** emerges from this concern, bringing together insights from dialogic, social constructivist and compassionate pedagogies to propose a framework that moves inclusion from principle to practice. Its contribution is therefore not simply to advocate for more inclusive teaching, but to provide educators



with a way of questioning how knowledge is produced, whose voices are heard, how authority is shared, and how students can move from recipients of education to active participants in its creation and application

Disrupting the Discourse (DtD): A Dialogic Framework for Inclusive and Transformative Teaching

Seven Principles for Inclusive and Transformative Teaching

Disrupt Traditional Teaching

Accessible principle

1. Learning should challenge assumptions, not simply transfer information.

Create opportunities for students to question ideas, bring their lived experiences into the classroom, and challenge dominant ways of thinking. Shift the classroom from a lecture-led model towards shared dialogue, where knowledge is explored together rather than delivered from expert to novice (Brazant, 2023).

Rather than asking:

"How do I teach this?"

Ask:

"How can students help reshape the conversation?"

In practice

- Challenge "one right answer" thinking.
- Invite multiple perspectives.
- Use dialogue instead of transmission.
- Make space for voices that are often unheard.
- Share authority without losing academic rigor.

2. Create the Conditions for Learning



Learning happens best when students feel psychologically safe enough to think critically, take risks, and contribute (Brazant, 2024). An inclusive classroom is not simply welcoming, it is intellectually compassionate. Students should feel respected, supported and confident enough to test ideas without fear of embarrassment or failure.

Teaching should respond to where students are, not where we assume they should already be.

Instead of asking:

"Have I covered the content?"

Ask:

"Have I created an environment where students feel able to engage with it?"

In practice

- Encourage curiosity before correctness.
- Build trust through dialogue.
- Normalise uncertainty.
- Respond flexibly to student needs.
- Create belonging alongside challenge.

3. Build Knowledge Together

Knowledge is created through participation, reflection, and experience, not simply received (Brazant, 2026).

Students bring valuable knowledge from their own cultures, communities, and lived experiences. Effective teaching helps students connect these experiences with academic theory through dialogue, collaboration, and guided support.

Learning becomes more meaningful when students actively construct understanding rather than memorise information.

Instead of asking:

"What do students need to know?"



Ask:

"How can students make meaning from this?"

In practice

- Scaffold difficult concepts.
- Use discussion before instruction where appropriate.
- Connect theory with real-world experiences.
- Encourage reflection.
- Build understanding collaboratively.

Dialogic Teaching as Praxis

This framework integrates disruption, and student agency to challenge monologic, transmissive learning models and instead fosters an inclusive, transformative educational experience and applying Brazant's (2026) 7 principles to dialogic teaching and facilitation, also referred to as Disrupting the Discourse (DtD).

1. Disruption as a Learning Tool

Learning should be uncomfortable, provocative, and transformative. Students engage with radical dialogue, lived experiences, and counter-narratives to disrupt knowledge hierarchies. Challenges monologic teaching and the passive transmission of knowledge.

2. Interrogate Knowledge & Power Structures

Disrupts traditional learning techniques. Introduces non-Western epistemologies, oral histories, and embodied knowledge. Recognises that lecturers and students have varying levels of knowledge, requiring co-construction and mediation of understanding.

Encourages educators and students as co-creators of knowledge rather than passive recipients.

3. Experiential & Performative Learning

Uses digital content, storytelling, and disruptive pedagogy to make learning dynamic and relevant. Examples include other ways of knowing found in creative expressions of



Hip-Hop, spoken word, and performance-based assessments as legitimate knowledge production methods. Prioritises real-world live briefs where possible, demonstrating impact on live projects over passive learning to ensure students apply their knowledge beyond academia.

4. Student Agency & Institutional Transformation

Moves beyond tokenistic inclusion to true power redistribution in education.

Embeds co-creation, mentorship, and peer-led curriculum design to foster engagement and ownership. Encourages criticality and curiosity, using dialogue and debate to interrogate and where relevant, challenge dominant ideologies. Frames students as agents of social change, rejecting deficit-based models of education and student learning.

5. Collective Learning Ecosystem

Establishes a dialogic teaching and learning environment, where learning is a shared endeavor. Engages Librarians, academic support, institutional and industry partners researchers, Learning Developers, and students in a collaborative learning network (and other stakeholders). Ensures learning interactions are inclusive and culturally responsive, proactively addressing student alienation and differential degree outcomes.

6. Co-Creation in Evaluation & Assessment

Reframes evaluation as a participatory, dialogic process rather than top-down judgment or surveillance. Embeds co-creation of assessment criteria, rubrics, and outputs between educators and students. Integrates digital content creation (e.g., podcasts, zines, video essays, blogs) as valid forms of assessment. Employs participatory methods such as peer-to-peer evaluation, reflective journaling, and participatory action research. Recognising diverse knowledge forms and lived experiences, challenging the dominance of written, linear assessment models. Encourages reflexivity and continuous dialogue to ensure assessments are relevant, fair, and transformative. Therefore, positioning evaluation as an iterative, collaborative process embedded throughout the learning journey, not a static endpoint.

7. Employability & Skills Development through Knowledge Exchange

Connects learning to real-world, through live projects and Knowledge Exchange (KE) initiatives to enhance employability and work experience. Embeds collaboration with external partners, industry professionals, and community organisations. Provides



students with opportunities to apply their skills in authentic, impactful contexts beyond the classroom as part of creative problem solving. Develops transferable technical and soft skills such as project management, critical thinking, and digital literacy.

Encourages co-created projects that contribute to students' professional portfolios and networks. Positions students as active contributors to societal and industry challenges, enhancing graduate outcomes. Aligns employability with socially responsive, transformative learning, moving beyond transactional career models.

Conclusion: Towards a Dialogic Pedagogy

This framework does not claim to single-handedly resolve degree awarding gaps or differential outcomes for specific student groups as a one size fits all rubric. However, it provides a structured approach to making learning more inclusive, critical, and action oriented. Disrupting traditional methods, interrogating knowledge, integrating performance-based learning, and embedding student agency are essential to transforming higher education and the future of learning as we know it.

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Brazant, K. (2024) Capturing the moment: Facilitating learning from the margins a photographic essay. As part of the Disrupting the Discourse: The Culture Decoded Series* submitted to ALDinHE journal

<https://journal.aldinhe.ac.uk/index.php/jldhe/article/view/1248>

Brazant, K. (2023) Disrupt the Discourse: Applying Critical Race Theory as a conceptual framework for learning and teaching. Special Issue on Equity & Inclusion Efforts: Tackling inequality in educational and other contexts. In *Equity in Education & Society*, Sage publications. (Published) <https://doi.org/10.1177/27526461231163325>

Disrupting the Discourse (DtD): A Dialogic Framework for Inclusive and Transformative Teaching. Aide Memoire

Seven Principles for Inclusive and Transformative Teaching



1. Disruption as a Learning Tool

- Learning should be uncomfortable, provocative, and transformative.
- Students engage with radical dialogue, lived experiences, and counter-narratives to disrupt knowledge hierarchies.
- Challenges monologic teaching and the passive transmission of knowledge.

2. Interrogate Knowledge & Power Structures

- Disrupts traditional learning techniques.
- Introduces non-Western epistemologies, oral histories, and embodied knowledge.
- Recognises that lecturers and students have varying levels of knowledge, requiring co-construction and mediation of understanding.
- Encourages educators and students as co-creators of knowledge rather than passive recipients.

3. Experiential & Performative Learning

- Uses digital content, storytelling, and disruptive pedagogy to make learning dynamic and relevant.
- Leverages Hip-Hop, spoken word, and performance-based assessments as legitimate knowledge production methods.
- Prioritises real-world impact projects over passive learning to ensure students apply their knowledge beyond academia.

4. Student Agency & Institutional Transformation

- Moves beyond tokenistic inclusion to true power redistribution in education.



- Embeds co-creation, mentorship, and peer-led curriculum design to foster engagement and ownership.
- Encourages criticality and curiosity, using dialogue and debate to interrogate and where relevant, challenge dominant ideologies.
- Frames students as agents of social change, rejecting deficit-based models of education and student learning.

5. Collective Learning Ecosystem

- Establishes a dialogic teaching and learning environment, where learning is a shared endeavor.
- Engages Librarians, academic support, institutional partners Lecturers, Learning Developers, and students in a collaborative learning network (and other stakeholders).
- Ensures learning interactions are inclusive and culturally responsive, proactively addressing student alienation and differential degree outcomes.

6. Creation in Evaluation & Assessment

- Reframes evaluation as a participatory, dialogic process rather than top-down judgment.
- Embeds co-creation of assessment criteria, rubrics, and outputs between educators and students.
- Integrates digital content creation (e.g., podcasts, zines, video essays, blogs) as valid forms of assessment.
- Employs participatory methods such as peer-to-peer evaluation, reflective journaling, and participatory action research.
- Recognises diverse knowledge forms and lived experiences, challenging the dominance of written, linear assessment models.



- Encourages reflexivity and continuous dialogue to ensure assessments are relevant, fair, and transformative.
- Positions evaluation as an iterative, collaborative process embedded throughout the learning journey, not a static endpoint.

7. Employability & Skills Development through Knowledge Exchange

- Connects learning to real-world, live projects and Knowledge Exchange (KE) initiatives.
- Embeds collaboration with external partners, industry professionals, and community organizations.
- Provides students with opportunities to apply their skills in authentic, impactful contexts beyond the classroom.
- Develops transferable skills such as project management, critical thinking, digital literacy, and creative problem-solving.
- Encourages co-created projects that contribute to students' professional portfolios and networks.
- Positions students as active contributors to societal and industry challenges, enhancing graduate outcomes.
- Aligns employability with socially responsive, transformative learning—moving beyond transactional career models.



Disrupting the Discourse (DtD): Checklist for Inclusive and Transformative Teaching.

Principle	Criteria	Met (✓)
1 Disruption as a Learning Tool	Learning activities provoke discomfort, criticality, and or transformation	
	Students engage with radical dialogue, lived experiences, and counter-narratives.	
	Traditional monologic teaching models are challenged.	
2 Interrogate Knowledge & Power Structures	Inclusion of non-Western epistemologies, oral histories, and embodied knowledge (challenge bias, critical unlearning, spark curiosity).	
	Acknowledgement of varied knowledge levels; co-construction of understanding	
	Educators and students positioned as co-creators of knowledge	
3 Experiential & Performative Learning	Use of digital content, storytelling, and disruptive pedagogy	
	Integration of performance-based assessments / pedagogies, e.g. spoken word, visual scrap book, podcast peer review, and creativity.	
	Real-world live briefs prioritised over passive learning	
4 Student Agency & Institutional Transformation	Co-creation, mentorship, and peer-led curriculum design embedded	
	Opportunities for dialogue, debate, and critique of dominant ideologies and methodologies making way for new ways of knowing	
	Students framed as agents of social change; deficit-based models rejected	



5 Collective Learning Ecosystem	Dialogic learning environment established involving staff and students	
	Collaboration with Librarians, Learning Developers, academic support, and industry partners	
	Learning interactions inclusive, culturally responsive, cognisant and addresses differential student outcomes and marginalised voices	
6 Co-Creation in Evaluation & Assessment	Co-created assessment criteria, rubrics, and outputs.	
	Use of multimodal outputs (e.g. podcasts, zines, blogs, video essays,)	
	Participatory evaluation methods: peer evaluation, reflective journaling, action research and storytelling	
	Assessment is iterative, reflexive, and dialogic	
7 Employability & Skills Development through Knowledge Exchange	Learning linked to live projects and KE initiatives	
	Collaboration with external partners, industry, and community organisations	
	Opportunities for applying skills in real-world contexts	
	Development of transferable skills (project management, AI, digital literacy, problem-solving)	
	Co-created projects contributing to professional portfolios/networks	
	Students seen as solution focused contributors to societal problems or industry challenges	



About Disrupting the Discourse (DtD)

Disrupting the Discourse (DtD) is an evolving conceptual and practical framework exploring dialogue, facilitation, co-creation, public pedagogy and institutional transformation across higher education and community settings.

This paper presents Version 1.0 of the framework.

Subsequent iterations may evolve through research, practice, and collaboration.

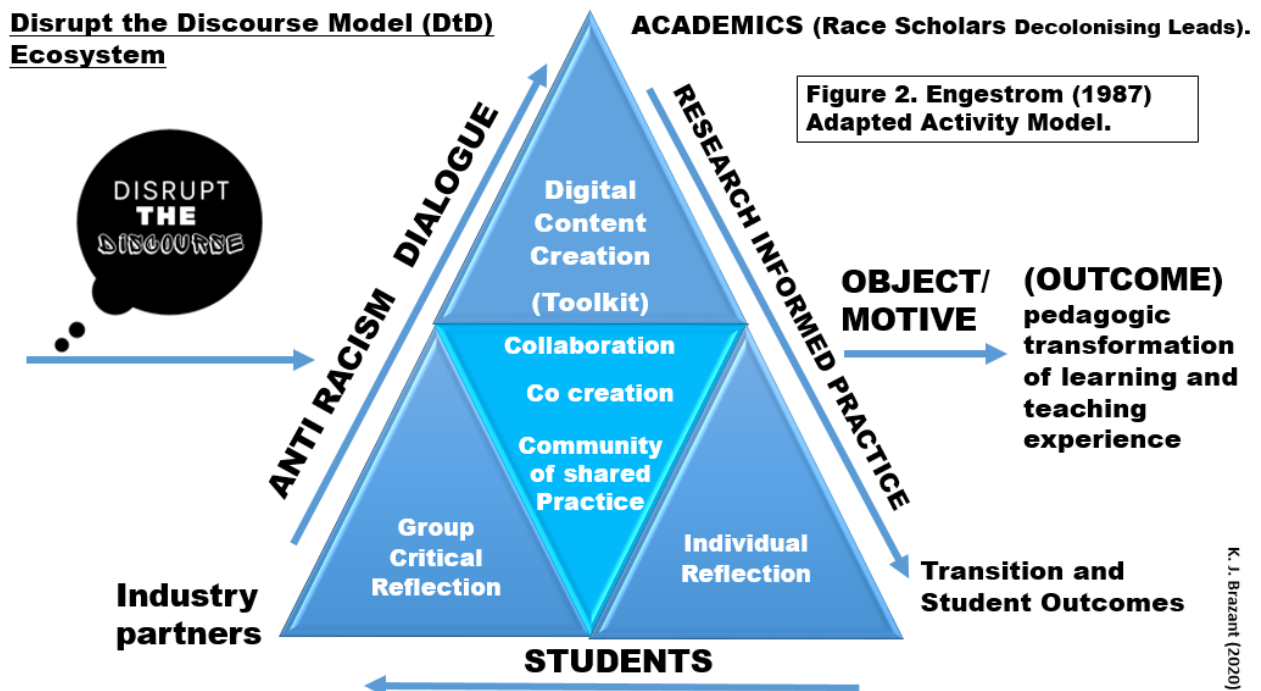


Figure 2: Illustration of the Disrupting the Discourse Activity Model.



Related outputs:

Brazant, J.K, (2026) *Disrupting the Discourse (DtD): A Dialogic Framework for inclusive and Transformative Teaching*. In: The Inclusive Training Playbook for Higher Education: 100+ Tips on How to Embed Inclusivity into Your Practice. Routledge. ISBN 9781003506508.

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Kevin J. Brazant

Researcher | Facilitator | Founder of Lounge Akademics™

Exploring dialogue, facilitation, public pedagogy, creative practice and institutional transformation through scholarship and cultural production.

ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8457-6987>

Research profile: <https://researchers.arts.ac.uk/3009-kevin-brazant/about>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/kevinbrazant/>

Lounge Akademics: <https://linktr.ee/loungeakademics>