Title
You guys are going to pretend to be a scientist: Positioning talk in science inquiry classrooms (EDU 2)

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Authors
Melissa Cook
Deborah Fields
William A. Sandoval

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“You guys are gonna pretend that you are a scientist:”
Positioning talk in science classrooms

Melissa Cook, Deborah Fields, and William Sandoval
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How are students positioned in relationship to science during an inquiry unit?

- Positioning happens all the time
  Speakers position themselves and their interlocutors in relationship to subject matter, roles, tasks, norms, and in relationship to each other.
- Are students positioned as scientists?

Different enactments of the same inquiry curricula position students differently

“Pretend that you are a scientist” in Ms. H’s class

Ms. H: “/is you guys are gonna pretend that you are a scientist. You know how my husband is a scientist? Students: yeah
Ms. H: “How he works at UCLA? What he does is he'll go somewhere and he sees something like this and he has to figure out what is, what he wants to study. What he thinks is different, what's the anomaly. Um, Elizabeth, what's an anomaly?” (laughs)
Elizabeth: (inaudible) “that doesn’t fit the pattern.”

“Doing actual science” in Mr. L’s class

Mr. L: (continuing) “...uh, investigators. As scientists. We're going to be doing actual science, we're going to be using some of the UCLA sensors that are in the Santa Monica Mountains to get some of our data, and we're gonna try to see what we can discover. Plants happen to be our, the focus of the unit. Okay? Now. Let me hand out this first sheet and we're gonna read through it. Alright, who would like to read the first paragraph?”

Positioning RE: science roles, science tasks, science norms

When were students positioned RE: science?

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<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Selection Rationale</th>
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<tr>
<td>Lesson Five</td>
<td>observing the Santa Monica Mountains</td>
<td>Students observe a photo of the Santa Monica Mountains and develop testable questions about what they see. The group settles on three micro-climates and develops testable questions about them. This lesson provides an overt opportunity for teachers to position students in terms of science.</td>
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<td>Lesson Seven</td>
<td>Investigating Sensor Data</td>
<td>Students use a web application to test their predictions about how sensors have been affected in different conditions in the Santa Monica Mountains by examining weather data and leaf data from those micro-climates. This lesson introduces students to a scientific process (scientific investigation) and positions them as scientists in terms of science.</td>
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<td>Lesson Eight</td>
<td>Four Review</td>
<td>Students prepare to evaluate their essays and have a discussion about them. This lesson is modeled on the publication process in professional science and is an opportunity for teachers to position students in terms of science.</td>
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How were students positioned RE: science?

Positioning RE: Science Roles

| Antonio: | Man this is hard! |
| Ms. H: | “Mm Hmmm, it is! So this is what my husband does, he'll go and he'll see some rocks, and then, so he has a big question of why are those rocks there, and he'll ask other questions about those rocks that will help answer the big question. |
| Elizabeth: | I say that there'd be bigger leaves. |
| Mr. L: | So you've made a hypothesis. |

Positioning RE: Science Tasks

| Mr. L: | But we don't know what's the right answer yet. |
| Elizabeth: | I say that there'd be bigger leaves. |

Positioning RE: Science Norms

| Mr. L: | All right, so Tyrone's saying if you include the data to prove it, and refer to it, then maybe you've covered it. If you state it's the biggest, you might need to have proof for that. |