# Intentionally Collaborating, Instructing, and Reflecting: Core Principles of Teaching Practice

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## Abstract

Emerging from the Covid-19 pandemic, a school's teacher-leaders draw on an Interactional Ethnographic Approach to co-construct an inquiry community of Professionals Developing Professionals called Depth of Study (DOS). The study examines the three premises that undergird DOS: Making Visible the Invisible through an Interactional Ethnographic Perspective, Culture-in-the-Making, and The Over-Time Nature of Change: Periphery to Center. Through the analysis of three Telling Cases, the authors make visible how each of the three premises learned within the DOS setting affect student learning in the classroom setting.

### Intentionally Collaborating, Instructing, and Reflecting: Core Principles of Teaching Practice

> Insight, I believe, refers to that depth of understanding that comes by setting experiences, yours and mine, familiar and exotic, new and old, side by side, learning by letting them speak to one another. (Bateson, 1994, p. 14)

> What would it be like to have not only color vision but culture vision, the ability to see the multiple worlds of others? (Bateson, 1994, p. 52)

Have you ever wondered what it would be like to have culture vision, the ability to see the multiple worlds of others? We have. And we had to in order to behold the opportunity ahead of us post the Covid-19 pandemic shutdown. As we emerge, having been forced to teach remotely, we see that the pandemic manifested among us a culture of isolation. Now, we find ourselves on a journey to transform our school's culture from one of survival and isolation into a collaborative inquiry community of *professionals developing professionals*. In this article we examine how our school, Berkeley Hall, approaches ongoing, site-based, educator professional learning called Depth of Study (DOS). It is a collaborative space for developing shared conceptually and pedagogically coherent practices that supports teachers to collaboratively inquire into their teaching practices.

In the last five decades we have seen the field of professional development for teachers evolve and transform, shaped by epistemological shifts responding to the eras' dominant conceptual bases for what constitutes ongoing professional development and learning for teachers (Carter Andrews & Richmond, 2019, Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; McDonald et al., 2013). In the present era, we find ourselves navigating an articulated terrain with various maps to guide us (Athans, 2022; Córdova et al., 2012; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2007; Nguyen, 2019). Whether it is Ball's "high-leverage teaching practices" (teachingworks.org) or the "durable practices" for professional development programs of

Córdova et al. (2015, 2016), all argue for the creation of intentional inquiry-driven learning communities centered around conceptually and pedagogically coherent practices. How are we, then, to develop these collaborative inquiry-centric and practice-focused, intentional learning communities for our teachers working in the field?

## Overview

Here we explore the three premises for intentional culture building that undergird our DOS approach to site-based teacher learning, Depth of Study (DOS). We begin by articulating the research questions driving our inquiry, followed by the location and setting of our study. We then discuss the roots of and routes to the three coauthors' professional learning journeys followed by a presentation of the conceptual and methodological perspectives orienting our study. We organize the data analyses in the form of Telling Cases (Mitchell, 1984) to make those premises visible in action. We conclude the piece with a discussion about the power of harnessing an Interactional Ethnographic Perspective to both design and examine our DOS culture-building work at Berkeley Hall.

## Driving Questions:

1) If the *why* of intentional culture building behind DOS makes a difference, what difference does that difference make? Related to this question, we explore three premises that both guide and explain our DOS work.

2) What does professional learning look like in a DOS setting and how does it influence teachers' classroom-based practices? Related to this question, we examine the cultural guide work that Córdova engages in to help teachers conceive of a part-to-whole relationship between DOS and their classroom settings.

## Location and Setting

Berkeley Hall is an independent school founded in 1911, located in the greater Los Angeles area. It is a Nursery through Eighth grade institution with 260 culturally and linguistically diverse students. There are 35 teachers with teaching experience ranging from 40 years to 1 year of practice. The first author, Córdova, is an educational ethnographer and consultant working with the second (Gamrath, Head of School) and third (Colmaire, Assistant Head of School) authors to co-construct a collaborative, site-based, inquiry-centric learning community; a model that places teachers as leaders and co-experts of their practice and professional learning.

Before proceeding, we wish to make explicit that at the core of our DOS work is a concept we refer to as *professionals developing professionals* (PDP) and not professional development. We do so because the term "professional development," a compound noun, connotes a static and monolithic entity. Whereas, professionals developing professionals position professional learning as activity guided by professional educators developing each other.

## Roots of and Routes to Professional Learning

The conceptual and pedagogical origins of our DOS work can be traced back to pivotal moments in our own individual professional learning journeys. While space does not allow for an in-depth accounting for the roots of and routes to our approach to professional learning, we want to make explicit that the origins of our ideas (roots of), and the form they evolve into over time (routes to) are embedded in our individual and shared histories. For Córdova, an Interactional Ethnographic Perspective for conceiving of culture-in-the-making (described in next section) can be traced back to 1995, when he became a fellow of the National Writing Project (NWP.org) Summer Institute, which he further built upon during the completion of his doctoral degree in 2004. Gamrath traces her understanding of an Interactional Ethnographic Perspective, and teachers teaching teachers, to 2012 when she participated in an NWP Summer Institute in Illinois, then led by Córdova. She later built upon this foundation to complete her doctoral degree in 2018. Colmaire describes her introduction to professionals developing professionals to 1998 when she first began working closely with the Teacher's College Reading Writing Project as a graduate student at Columbia University; she later completed her doctorate in 2022. The three authors share a complementary theoretical and pedagogical perspective for what constitutes professional learning; one that positions teachers as co-experts and co-leaders.

## Conceptual and Methodological Perspectives

The theoretical and methodological perspectives that undergird both our DOS approach, and analyses of the telling cases in this piece, are grounded in an Interactional Ethnographic Perspective (Santa Barbara Classroom Discourse Group, 1995), which lets us understand classrooms and learning settings as cultures-in-the-making (Santa Barbara Classroom Discourse Group, 1992a, 1992b) and knowledge as situated and socially constructed. From these perspectives, we seek to make visible the conceptual premises that drive our intentional culture-building DOS work by drawing on theories from anthropology (Frake, 1977; Gumperz & Cook-Gumperz, 1986; Spradley, 1980), critical discourse analysis (Fairclough, 1992; Ivanic, 1994), and literary theory (Bakhtin, 1986).

The three premises central to our DOS work are:

1. *Making Visible the Invisible through an Interactional Ethnographic Perspective.*
2. *Culture-in-the-Making.*
3. *The Over-Time Nature of Change: Moving from Periphery to Center.*

Telling cases, proposed by Mitchell (1984), serve to make visible something that was previously not available to be known.

## History of Depth of Study at Berkeley Hall

The origins of DOS can be traced to 2019 as a school-wide endeavor to support faculty to develop a shared commitment to students' ongoing academic improvement. From its origins, participating in DOS enabled teachers to develop goals and enact them. DOS teams worked together in an ongoing, structured way to strengthen specific aspects of teaching and learning at Berkeley Hall. Teachers analyzed student

work and performance data in order to identify facets of the curriculum and student experience that could benefit from improvement and then bring together their best ideas to make it happen. There had been a dedicated time to DOS, which was led by outside consultants who came in a once a month with a pre-packaged program to articulate and chart goals, collect and examine artifacts of student work, and track progress. When our school shut down in the spring of 2020 due to Covid-19, educators worked remotely, and DOS ceased to continue.

## Depth of Study Today

DOS takes place weekly on Wednesday mornings at 7:30-8:25 a.m. It is built into the master schedule with students arriving on campus at 8:30 a.m. The academic year is divided into trimesters, with each trimester divided into three, 3-week cycles of DOS activity. The following sections comprise discussions of the *Why, t*he *What*, and the *Wow* of DOS in order to make visible its rationale, structure, and finally, its process. Thereafter, we present a discussion on the Three Foundational Principles for Intentional Culture Building salient to our approach to DOS. This is followed by a subsequent presentation of the principles in action; each paired with an examination of artifacts via three Telling Cases (Mitchell, 1984).

### The Why

Depth of Study is a time and place for educators to codevelop how they want to engage with each other and explore diverse ways to engage with students and each other in teaching and learning processes. Educators have developed DOS as an evolving process to hold themselves accountable to important stakeholders: each other, students, and their parents. This dialogic perspective, or conversation between how they engage with students and the decisions that led to those actions, become a rich source for study. When educators examine their decision-making and teaching events, they can collaboratively develop a shared language about what powerful teaching, planning, and assessment look and sound like.

### The What

Depth of Study is a structured time for educators to convene weekly in order to explore the most pressing issues about teaching and learning which affect our students. It is a dedicated time for collaboratively inquiring into the day-to-day life of teaching and learning at Berkeley Hall.

Across each trimester, faculty meet weekly in cross-grade and cross-discipline groups to engage in a range of professional development topics developed collaboratively between faculty and leadership. At the onset of each DOS trimester, faculty collaboratively articulate goals for their individual grade level/discipline, grade-level band (Lower and Upper Division), all aligned to the 2022-2023 academic school year's research goal, "What structures and systems will nurture an ever-evolving (and self-informing) culture of reflecting, intending & taking informed action?"

### The How

Figure 1 depicts the part-to-whole relationship among the long and short time spans of DOS activity. Each week's DOS focus has a structure, processes, and protocols.
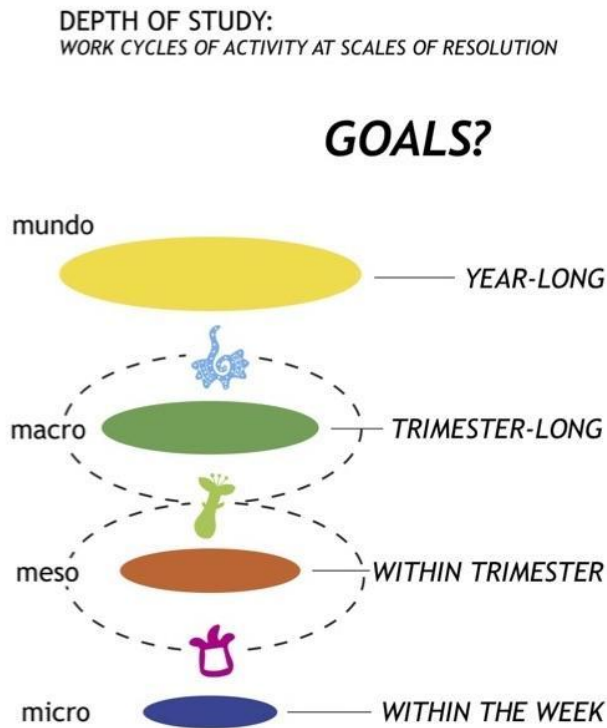


The year-long, or **Mundo**, view encompasses our DOS work for the whole of the 2022-2023 academic year.

Each **Macro** Trimester is divided into **Meso** Work Cycles, or slightly smaller units of time, which are guided by goals.

Each **Meso** Work Cycle is further divided into smaller, or **Micro** units of time which will define your weekly DOS time together.

It is our intention that by drawing on an over-time *and* whole-to-part and part-to-whole accounting of how we invest our time in DOS, that we will grow intellectually and spiritually both as individuals and as a collective.

Fig. 1: DOS part-to-whole.

The three authors collaborate with DOS facilitators and teachers to determine yearlong goals, and the content experiences and practices for DOS. In order to support participating teachers to extend the focused activity within and across individual DOS meetings into the classroom, Córdova (first author) takes on the role of "thinking-partner" during the week by collaborating closely with teachers. They invite him to design and plan a three-day unit of study where together they explore the content of DOS, translating it into the realm of the classroom. Córdova partners with teachers in a variety of ways. Some teachers only want him to demonstrate inquiry approaches to teaching and learning, while others wish to co-teach with him. Others only want him to observe them and provide feedback on their teaching practices.

## Three Foundational Principles for Intentional Culture-Building

An Interactional Ethnographic Perspective (Santa Barbara Discourse Group, 1992a, 1992b) positions the teacher-researcher as both participating in an experience and also naming the experience, thus further intentionally shaping the experience. This stepping inside an experience, and stepping outside of it, enables the teacher-researcher to develop a meta-language to make the invisible visible. The three foundational principles are offered as essential processes for intentional culture building. They work together as a system that accounts for an Interactional Ethnographic Perspective, experiences and practices, and the periphery-to-center and overtime nature of developing shared cultural understandings, practices, and belonging.

## Telling Case 1 of Premise 1: Making Visible the Invisible Through an Interactional Ethnographic Perspective.

The "DNA" represents salient disciplinary practices that emerge specifically from the field of anthropology and Interactional Ethnography; and generally from within and across all disciplines both formal and informal. These practices and actions enable us to behold a phenomenon such as an artifact, experience, or event in order to engage in progressively unfolding layers of discovery. Through the processes of *Deep-Dive & Document*, we can orient ourselves to become present and curious about the phenomenon before us. *Notice & Name* engages us to describe and label the phenomenon, while *Analyze & Announce* requires us to question and account for what we see to self and others.
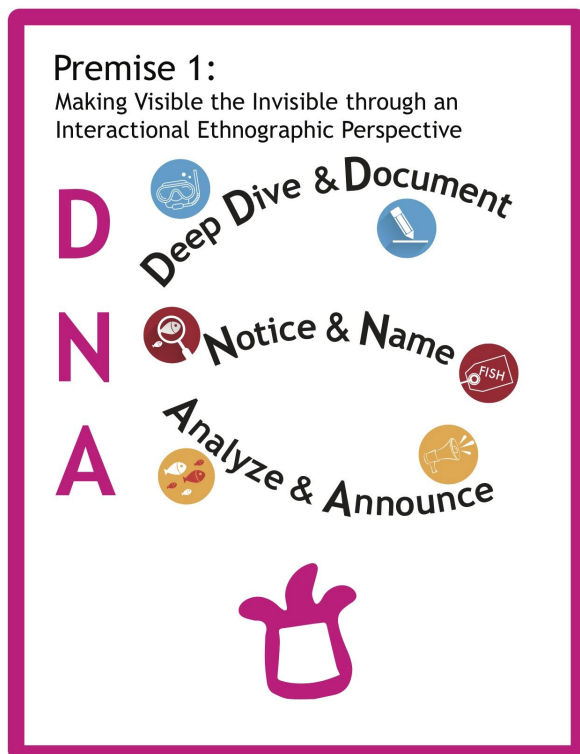


Fig. 2: DNA making the invisible visible.

## Snapshot of Practice During DOS: Ethnography of the Day

A salient practice of DOS is a process we call the Ethnography of the Day, which is a living document that we coauthor. During our professional work together, a participant educator volunteers to take on the role of the Ethnographer of the Day. This role requires that the volunteer become a participant-observer by concurrently participating in the DOS events and taking notes on what participants are working on from the beginning to end of the day's work. The Ethnographer of the Day then synthesizes the notes and summarizes them for the whole group to be shared during the subsequent DOS meeting. The Ethnographer of the Day also interrogates the events captured in the notes in form of questions they to pose to the group.

In order to practice an Interactional Ethnographic Perspective as a way to make sense of our daily events by making visible their significance, the Ethnographer of the Day observes in two ways to produce the Ethnography of the Day. It is organized into columns with time stamps (see Table 1). The left is labeled *Note-Taking,* and the right one is labeled *Note-Making*. Note-Taking is a process of documenting descriptively the events and sub-events of the day's activities. By creating a written description of events, the reader—or in the case with DOS, the group of participants—is able to behold the prior day's activities absent of interpretation. Interpretation or evaluation is important. However, we have found that too often we retell an event with a layer of evaluation or analysis, which may or may not be what actually happened. By narrowing what is described under Note-Taking, we strive to account for the event as descriptively as possible in order for the beholder to offer their own interpretation or evaluation.

The Note-Making side of the observation is the place where the Ethnographer of the Day makes sense of the observation, offering their questions, interpretations, and insights. Whereas the Note-Taking observations can be seen as descriptive almost verbatim accounts or written phenomena of what actually happened, the Note-Making offers a dialogic, generative, and meaning-making space. When the Ethnographer of the Day offers interpretations based upon the descriptive observation, they engage in a dialogic process of engaging with the description in order to make sense with and from it. In doing so, two perspectives are placed together, side by side, letting them talk to one another (Bateson, 1994).

In Table 1, we see an excerpt from Kendall's, a DOS participant, Ethnography of the Day dated 7/20/2022, which is the account for the prior day's events. An excerpt from within the 9:00-9:10 a.m. sub-event under the Note-Taking column reveals, *"...Ralph checks in with the group, asks how we slept, forecasts the day…"* Kendall captures how Ralph (first author) framed or articulated the session's forthcoming events. By having chosen to capture Ralph's framing of the day, and not something else, Kendall is signaling that beginnings matter, and how they actually begin matters more. Under the Note-Making column for that captured observation, Kendall wonders about the significance of how the day is being framed, *"I wonder if everyone is feeling the value of checking needs and becoming aware of what awaits for the day/direction we are headed."* Here, we see Kendall using the verbs: *wonder, feeling, checking, becoming aware, [direction we] are headed*. We argue that those active verbs encapsulate how the DOS group is working through the unknown (wonder), harnessing empathy (feeling and checking), learning to notice what is unfolding (becoming aware), and implicating a way-finding progression (are headed).

Table 1

*Excerpt From Kendall's Ethnography of the Day*

| Time | Note-Taking | Note-Making |
|---|---|---|
| 9:00 | Opening Circle: Ralph checks in with the group, asks how we slept, forecasts the day by outlining what he hopes for the day and the schedule, and the intended outcomes for the day. | *I wonder if everyone is feeling the value of checking needs and becoming aware of what awaits for the day/the direction we are headed. Is Ralph intentionally modeling this for us or has it become so ingrained in his teaching/facilitation practice? Or perhaps it's just best practice? I wonder by the end of the day how we will feel about our progress with the intended outcomes?* |

The Ethnography of the Day makes concrete the importance of what may otherwise remain an abstract culture-defining aspect of an ethnographic perspective. Kendall harnesses the dialogic space that opens up between the Note-Taking and Note-Making observations in order to explore and make sense of what the participants are co-constructing. By providing a written account of the prior day's events paired with his interpretations, the participants are able to recall what happened and behold a colleague's accounting and interpretation of it. Participants are also able to see how they might organize their own Ethnography of the Day when it is their turn. Furthermore, we also see that the individual (Kendall) engages within the collective (his colleagues) in a meaning-making, dialogic process of the individual-within-the-collective (Vygotsky, 1978). From this perspective, we argue that the literate practice of producing an Ethnography of the Day and engaging in developing an ethnographic perspective is an enacted case of Premise 1: Making Visible the Invisible through an Interactional Ethnographic Perspective.

## Telling Case 2 of Premise 2: Culture-in-the-Making

Building on the first Telling Case above, we focus our second analysis on how DOS participants manifested a shared understanding and language of what constitutes Premise 2: Culture-in-the-Making by examining a process and experience we call the *Unsiloed Transdisciplinarity*.

Here we argue that students do not simply learn math, reading, writing, social studies, and so on, as bodies of content knowledge to consume and replicate outside of context. By instructing in academic language and practices, we position students to take up disciplinary content through enacted ways of thinking, doing and knowing, such as what mathematicians, readers, writers, social scientists, *say* and *do*. When we approach teaching and learning from this perspective, we assist students to appropriate and develop fluency in the languages of the disciplines paired with the practices used by members of the disciplines. From this perspective, a mathematician is not something a Berkeley Hall student will become later when they grow up. Rather, from the moment they enter Berkeley Hall, students will be afforded

rich opportunities to engage in mathematical language and practices as meaning-making tools, thus becoming young mathematicians.

We behold, interact with, and learn from core content or experiences by harnessing practices salient to particular or diverse disciplines such as the sciences, mathematics, humanities, and so on. Figure 3 represents Premise 2: Culture-in-the-Making. Like Note-Taking in the Ethnography of the Day, in the left-hand column, Disciplinary Content, we can entertain the lessons, activities, experiences, that teachers and students engage in as opportunities for learning that we afford our students. Like Note-Making, in the right-hand column, Disciplinary Practices, we entertain the actions or ways of being in the world, that we afford our students to try on in order for them to behold phenomena (content experiences), make sense of it by interacting with and learning from it, and articulating their meaning-making. From this perspective, we seek to nurture powerful dialogic learning to emerge in the dance between Disciplinary Content and Disciplinary Practices.
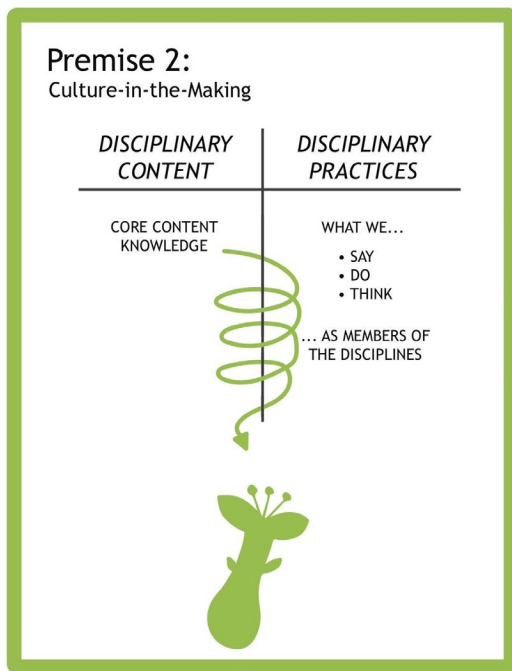


Fig. 3: Culture-in-the-making.

Students do not simply learn math, reading, writing, social studies, as a list of things to know and replicate outside of context. By instructing in academic language and practices, we position students to take up disciplinary content through enacted ways of thinking, doing and knowing, such as what mathematicians, readers, writers, social scientists, do. When we approach teaching and learning in this way, we assist students to appropriate and develop fluency in the languages of the disciplines paired with the practices used by members of the disciplines.

Given this perspective of disciplinary knowledge construction might be foreign to the uninitiated, how do we make this developmental journey accessible? The Unsiloed Transdisciplinarity process we have found provides an ethnographic and kinesthetic approach for making visible what members of disciplines do (actions) and how they produce knowledge (content).

## Snapshot of Practice During DOS: Unsiloed Transdisciplinarity

We introduced the Unsiloed Transdisciplinarity activity early in the year during DOS in order to develop a shared experience that manifests shared understandings of Premise 2: Culture-in-the-Making. Its process is as follows with participants:

1. Getting into groups of 2-4.
2. Being assigned a different disciplinary identity (e.g., reader, writer, mathematician, scientist, etc.)
3. Generating a written list of as many actions (verbs) that they know that disciplinary identity does.
4. Narrowing those lists of verbs to five.
5. Receiving a different stack of construction paper of one color per different discipline.
6. Writing the five verbs on a separate sheet of colored construction paper.
7. Standing in a large circle facing each other.
8. Speaking aloud, each discipline identifies itself by revealing its five verbs it decided upon and placing them face-up on the floor.
9. Becoming silent, and begin connecting the verbs in a visual manner.
10. Stopping and noticing what shapes and verb associations emerge.
11. Asking if there are other associations.
12. Engaging the process until all visual permutations of verb associations are exhausted.
13. Concluding by participants describing what happened, and what it might mean.

We have documented several meaning-making phases in how the Unsiloed Transdisciplinarity unfolds. First, when the disciplinary pairs first reveal their five verbs in the circle, they placed the five same-colored sheets on the floor, in what looked like many sets of siloed verbs, each set in the same color. Then, invariably and spontaneously, participants begin to group like verbs from across the different disciplines (e.g., *publish, wonder, hypothesize, observe, write, etc.*). Following this phase, participants then begin to organize the verbs irrespective of disciplines into meaning-making cycles (e.g., *wonder, hypothesize, observe, write, publish, etc.*).

Figure 4 shows a final permutation of the Unsiloed Transdisciplinarity from this year's DOS, which participants shaped into a spiral. One section of the spiral has a sequence of verbs, *evaluate, analyze, summarize, collaborate, lead with intention,* while another section's sequence of verbs contain, *envision, sees, thinks, ideates, infer, imagine.* Participants discuss at length what engaging in the Unsiloed Transdisciplinarity reveals about how we approach disciplinary knowledge development in students. The conversation begins with them describing how initially the disciplinary verbs were siloed, then connected across discipline, followed by the importance of the verbs needing to be structured in a meaning-making sequence.
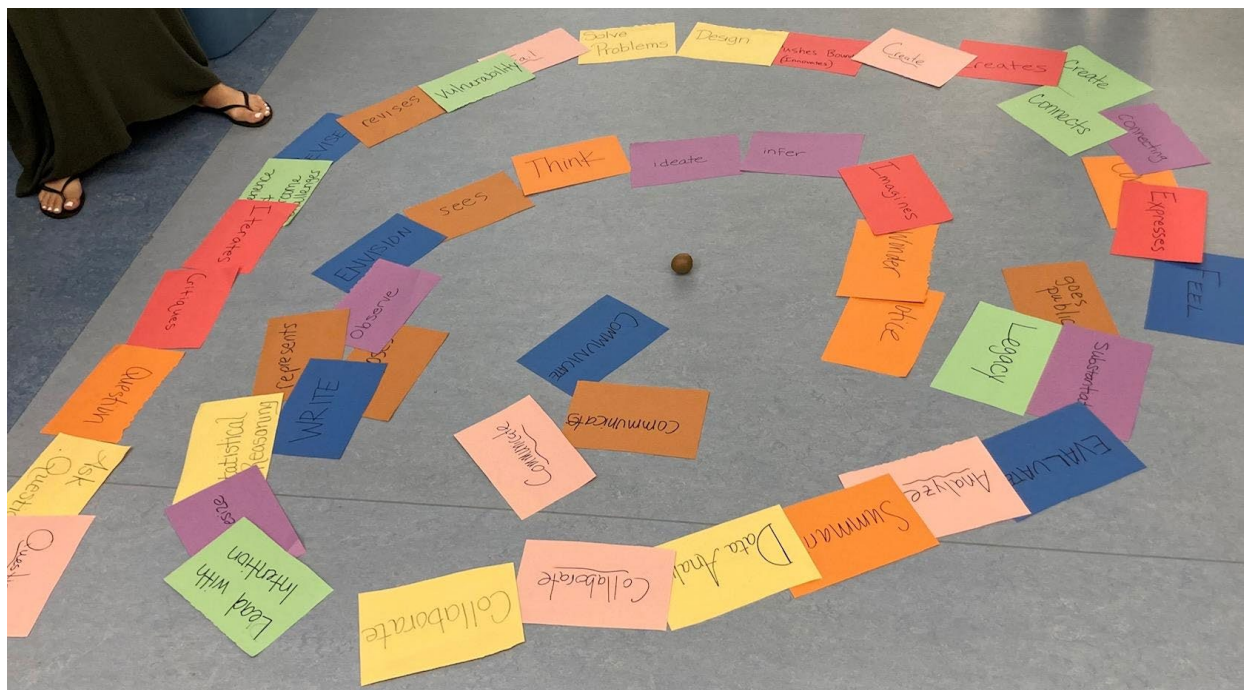


Fig. 4: Transdisciplinarity unsiloed.

We asked participants to think about how they go about introducing disciplinary content to their students, and which essential verbs of that discipline are necessary in order for students to build a disciplinary culture of artists, mathematicians, and scientists. One participant articulated in their Ethnography of the Day for the Unsiloed Transdisciplinarity event: *This! Has! Much! Potential! Just think what happens when we see just how each discipline is actually related to what happens in all others . . . they just look like and sound differently.* Here, they articulate the potential implications for practice when we see and harness that while the verbs or actions of each discipline might be particular to the discipline (they just look like and sound differently), they actually are saliently related (each discipline is actually related).

We argue that like the Note-Taking process from the Ethnography of the Day, that the Unsiloed Transdisciplinarity process draws on an Interactional Ethnographic Perspective by asking participants to articulate the verbs or actions of what members of disciplines do. Then, like the Note-Making process, when participants articulate the relationship among the disciplinary verbs, and make connections among them, they engage in a meaning-making process that begins to reveal a dialogic relationship between

disciplinary content and disciplinary actions. As we will see in the third Telling Case, participants see that disciplinary content is inert; only accessible by harnessing and embodying the verbs of disciplines in order to interact with and learn from disciplinary content. In this way a mathematical, scientific, artistic, or Berkeley Hall culture-in-the-making emerges over time, in and through the activities and experiences we engage in and the actions and verbs with which we behold them.

## Telling Case of Premise 3: The Over-Time Nature of Change—Moving from Periphery to Center

In Telling Case Two, we learned that we individually and collectively interact with and learn from core content and experiences by intentionally harnessing disciplinary practices, language, and actions. Life, however, is not a series of one-offs, disparately sequenced random series of events. Yet, many students experience learning in schools as such. And this decontextualized, or unrelated "lessons" or content experiences, approach was exacerbated during the isolated remote learning during the pandemic.

In Telling Case Three, we build on the prior two Telling Cases as we argue that there is an over-time and developmental nature for educators developing the knowledge and practices they engage with during the cultural realm of DOS and they then translate that into the cultural realm of the classroom.
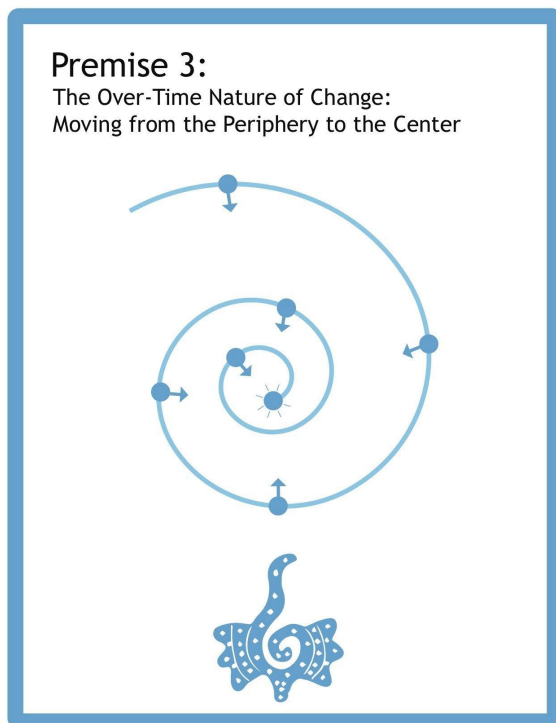


Fig. 5: Premise 3: Periphery to center.

## Snapshot of Practice from the Classroom: Constructing Terrariums

Bobbie and Jen are kindergarten teachers at Berkeley Hall and co-teach. They participate weekly in DOS and have asked Córdova (first author) to work with them and their students for the entirety of Trimester 1. The instructional focus for the first three-week cycle of activity was terrarium building by harnessing the Interactional Ethnographic DNA process (see Telling Case 1) of meaning-making.

On Wednesday, September 14, at 1:45 p.m., Bobbie, Jen, and Córdova enacted their terrarium studies. Córdova was lead teacher during the first lesson in the unit, while Bobbie and Jen co-facilitated and took notes to provide him with feedback. Figure 6 is an anchor chart for the "DNA Song." Students learned to sing the song along with corresponding gestures to embody the salient disciplinary practices of Deep-Dive & Document, Analyze & Announce, and Notice & Name (see Telling Case 1 for description). Córdova brought a terrarium into the classroom for the students to interact with and learn from it as an anchor phenomenon in order to harness the DNA disciplinary practices.
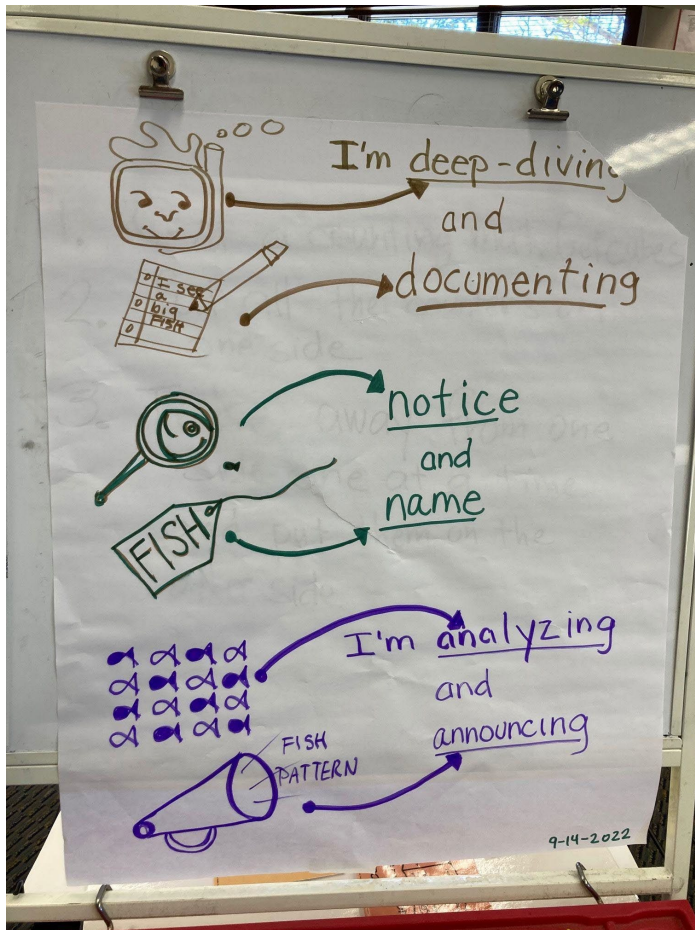


Fig. 6: Interactional ethnographic DNA process in kindergarten.

Students first "deeply dove" into the observation by noticing and orally documenting what they saw. Córdova documented their observations on the overhead projector. Córdova asked students to notice what was in the terrarium and foreshadowed, *"notice carefully because later you will be documenting*

the terrarium by making a diagram of it." Córdova asked, "what does naming something mean?" One student responded by saying, "you wrote fish to tell it's a fish." Córdova then framed the last part of the DNA process for the students by telling them a true story. He began with "most older students have a hard time with the last verbs, analyze and announce. What do you think those actions are asking us to do?" Students began to shout out, while others raised their hands. Their responses included:

1. There's fish.

2. Fish are swimming.

3. There's purple and white fish.

4. There's a pattern!

5. There's sixteen fish.

One student then interrupted us by shouting, "I know, I know! It's a pattern and the thing you put on your mouth [megaphone] means you have to shout out the pattern!" Needless to say, we noticed evidence that the students were beginning to apprehend the DNA process via the pictorial representation of those ethnographic verbs. Students concluded the lesson by documenting the terrarium we had explored together through the DNA process. In Figure 7, we see a student depiction of the terrarium. Notice what the student noticed and represented in their diagram? Notice what the student named in the diagram?
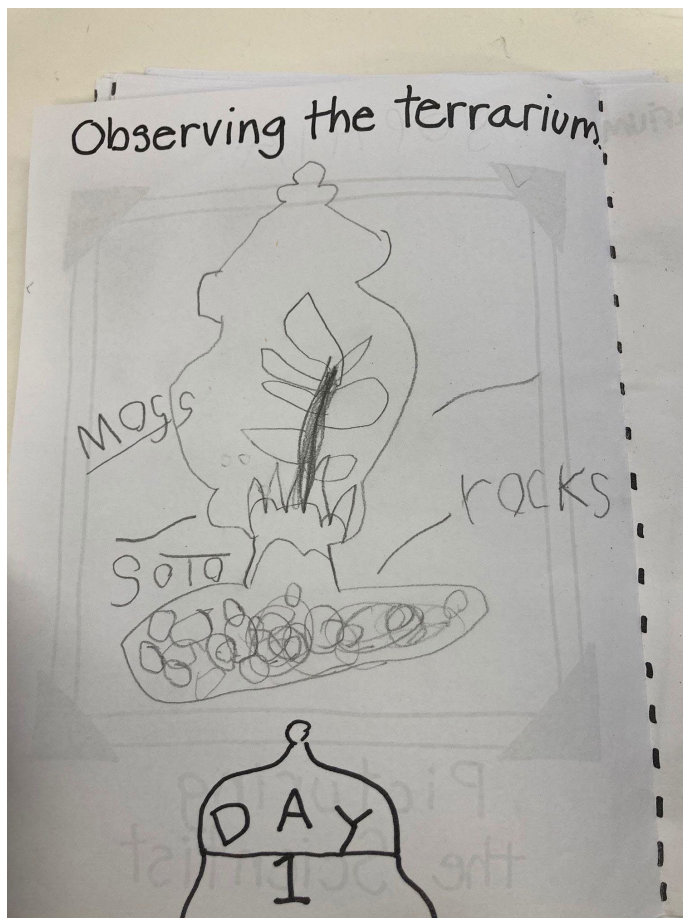


Fig. 7: Kindergarten terrarium diagram

The second day of the study involved students asking questions about how to build a terrarium, which led them to co-build a classroom terrarium. The third day involved students using the DNA process and knowledge of terrarium building to construct their own mini individual terraria.

We argue that the study of terrarium building in kindergarten was possible because the teachers understood the value of Premise 1: Making the Visible the Invisible Through an Interactional Ethnographic Perspective, which they first experienced during an earlier DOS session. The DNA process became a shared understanding around which they and Córdova could collaborate in order to explicitly support their students to develop an inquiry stance, or we argue an emergent Interactional Ethnographic Perspective, in order to interact with and learn from the phenomena of terraria.

This snapshot of classroom practice also makes visible Premise 2: Culture-in-the-Making, whereby students learned the salient ethnographic practices from the DNA process through a song in order to apply those disciplinary actions to engage in, which would become their co-constructing a culture of inquiry in the kindergarten classroom.

The significance of the collaborative work teachers engaged in during DOS around the three premises for intentional culture building and their understanding of its utility are evidenced in the case with the kindergarten teachers and Córdova co-constructing a unit of study on terraria. The over-time and developmental nature posited by Premise 3 conceptualizes participants as individuals within a collective, whose contextualized collaborating begins the process of moving from peripheral and individual understandings to shared and collective understandings. Bakhtin (1986) argues:

> Sooner or later what is heard and actively understood will find its response in the subsequent speech or behavior of the listener. In most cases, genres of complex cultural communication are intended precisely for this kind of actively responsive understanding with delayed action. (pp. 68–69)

What Bobbie and Jen first beheld and understood about DNA made their way, through their dialogic and practice-based collaborations with Córdova, from the cultural setting of DOS into the classroom. In this way, we make visible the part-to-whole phenomena for why we have conceptualized the structure of DOS at Berkeley Hall articulated in Figure 1: Depth of Study.

## Conclusion

What constitutes Depth of Study at Berkeley Hall is a collective effort that brings into focus how the concept of part-to-whole and whole-to-part relationships can be harnessed to co-construct a site-based, ethnographic approach, to professional learning based on the three premises for intentional culture building discussed in this study. We have made visible how the difference of intentional culture building behind DOS makes a difference, and the difference that difference makes in how professionals develop each other professionally. Moreover, we have shown and examined what professional learning looks like in a DOS setting and how it is affecting teachers' classroom-based practices and student learning.

Depth of Study is a place and perspective that nurture depth of understanding and emergent insight "by setting experiences, yours and mine, familiar and exotic, new and old, side by side, learning by letting them speak to one another" (Bateson, 1994, p. 14).

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