

Kamberelis, G., & Scott, K. D. (1992). Other people's voices: The coarticulation of texts and subjectivities. *Linguistics and Education, 4*, 359-403.

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Summary: This study is part of a yearlong action research project in a fourth-grade, inner-city classroom. Two children's essays were interpreted to explore the sources of the voices (i.e., teacher, peer group, parent), the types of voice appropriation (i.e., quoted, adopted, stylized, parodistic, polemic, idealized), and the functions of particular types of voice appropriation to establish various kinds of social and political alignments. Results illustrate that the children developed their own subjectivities orchestrating and challenging other people's language in their writing; however, the ways that they developed voices varied.

Assumptions:

- Subjectivity or voice refers to the ways individuals selectively relate to discursive practices and the ideologies embedded within them.
- All speakers or writers borrow and appropriate others' language to construct their own texts. Therefore, no text is simply the product of a single speaker or writer.

Findings:

- The two children's writing processes were closely connected to the processes of defining and redefining themselves in terms of who they were and who they were becoming in social groups to which they belonged.
- In their writing, the two children appropriated, orchestrated, and resisted other people's voices that existed in their social worlds. The children did this in different ways, however.
- The girl focused on the abstract ideological issues of racial pride, self-love, and racial harmony, and the boy gave more attention to concrete immediate social problems such as handgun ownership.
- Appropriating and resisting other people's voices allowed the children to objectify their unexamined subject positions. It also encouraged them to reflect how different truths and value systems intersected and contradicted one another.

Conclusions:

Writing should be approached as historical, intertextual, social, and political processes in classrooms. Thus, teaching children how to write involves engaging them in critical-literacy practices that guide them in appropriating and challenging multiple voices to

develop their own voices.

Suggestions for Teachers:

- Find ways to help students learn why and how to “appropriate” or “resist” others’ voices.
- Provide instruction that helps students see how appropriation is related to but different from plagiarism.

Suggestions for Literacy Leaders:

- Help teachers distinguish between appropriation and plagiarism.
- Develop school policies related to plagiarism.
- Explore with teachers ways that they can foster appropriation in their students’ writing.