

Peterson, S., & Calovini, T. (2004). Social ideologies in grade eight students' conversation and narrative writing. *Linguistics and Education, 15*, 121-139.

Key Words: Writing instruction, culturally responsive instruction

Summary: The researchers analyzed four eighth grade students' informal conversations during their narrative writing using systemic functional linguistics and related critical discourse analysis. They sought to examine intertextual links and ideological content of students' talk and writing. Results revealed that all the students were affected by social ideologies in terms of gender, age, ethnicity, and socioeconomic status in their informal talk and narrative writing in a complicated way.

Assumptions:

- Interaction is critical to learning. Understanding how students and teachers interact when they write facilitates our understanding of how students learn to write.
- Students write in a social context in which individuals from different parts of society meet, interact with, and use different texts. Thus, students' writing is affected by wider social-textual ideologies.

Findings:

- The students participated in discussions negotiating gender ideologies along with ideologies of race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and age.
- The students both supported each other engaging in conversations and challenged or confronted each other at some points in the writing sessions.

Conclusions:

Students' interactions during classroom literacy activities may be important for learning but also involve power relations among students around issues of gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and age.

Suggestions for Teachers:

- Tape record some student conversations. Analyze the tapes to look at power relations among students around issues of gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and age. Depending on findings, find ways to discuss with your students.
- Help students learn to hold productive and supportive independent discussions

about writing.

Suggestions for Literacy Leaders:

- Help teachers explore issues related to power relations among students around issues of gender, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, and age.