Student Plagiarism in Higher Education

Reflections on Teaching Practice

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Chapter 8

Shouldn't our expectations of students' and academics' intertextuality practices differ?

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> Imagine that you enter a parlor. You come late. When you arrive, others have long preceded you, and they are engaged in a heated discussion, a discussion too heated for them to pause and tell you exactly what it is about. In fact, the discussion had already begun long before any of them got there, so that no one present is qualified to retrace for you all the steps that had gone before. You listen for a while, until you decide that you have caught the tenor of the argument; then you put in your oar. Someone answers; you answer him; another comes to your defense; another aligns himself against you, to either the embarrassment or gratification of your opponent, depending upon the quality of your ally's assistance. However, the discussion is interminable. The hour grows late, you must depart. And you do depart, with the discussion still vigorously in progress.
>
> (Burke, 1941, pp. 110–11)

Burke's parlour is an apt metaphor for the intertextuality most of us expect of academic texts; sadly, most undergraduate papers couldn't be further from it. There is no vigorous discussion, no back and forth, and certainly no "listening a while" before responding. A more accurate metaphor might be viewers of a television talk show trying to simultaneously follow disengaged talking heads and reproduce what they say. Too often the result is an information dump of random and often inadequately cited words. It is my argument here that rethinking intertextuality practices in light of Burke's image shifts our focus away from those uncited words and the related challenge of trying to define plagiarism and the subcategories of unintentional or less intentional misuses of sources. The image of the parlour challenges us to think about intertextuality practices as *practices* not crimes, and this, in turn, allows us to refocus on teaching and mentoring academic writers from undergraduate to professor as they learn and refine those practices.

I am certainly not denying that people cheat. Academic writers of all levels have been caught misrepresenting the research, words, and ideas of others as their own original work. We call this form of cheating plagiarism and see it as a moral shortcoming of those who did it; but what if we ask instead why those people failed to

enter Burke's parlour, engage with ideas, and formulate their own in response? We might ultimately determine them to be academic con-men and -women and thereby guilty of ethical condemnation as charged. But in the case of students at least, such behaviour is an opportunity for pedagogical intervention, regardless of whether we deem the plagiarism to be intentional or "accidental." Instead of focusing all of our attention on "guilt," we are better served if we accept some culpability and use that to help us develop more effective responses.

In general, current pedagogy does not invite students into that parlour because it fails to explain why we engage with sources (Head & Eisenberg, 2010), fails to convince students that we care about what they have to say—sadly because that is sometimes true (Jamieson, 2013)—and fails to fully explain what is expected of source-based writing (Schwegler & Shamoon, 1982)—and what is considered transgressive (Howard, 1993). Too often, academic structures fail to give students and beginning academics the time, skills, or mentoring necessary to complete the complex work of intertextuality. I also believe that we should extend this institutional analysis to those academic con men and -women, asking why they fail to produce entirely original work and what conditions might need to exist to facilitate their doing so, but that is not the argument of this chapter.

My focus here is on why writers sometimes fail to produce entirely original prose when they are working with cited sources; what that prose—termed "patchwriting" (Howard, 1993), "misuse of sources" (Council of Writing Program Administrators, 2005), or "unintentional plagiarism" in many US academic honesty policies (Jamieson, 2016)—looks like; and what we can learn from it. My ultimate goal is to encourage the development of the pedagogies and mentoring strategies necessary to avoid these failures in the future. But first we need to explore what we consider to be transgressive, why we consider it so, how it is manifested in academic texts at different levels of sophistication, and how our responses might be more generative at those different levels.

It is my contention in this chapter that locating intertextuality practices within ethical/unethical or original/plagiarized binaries distracts us from their nuances. Doing so prevents us from recognizing that intertextuality practices develop over time and should be understood as part of a continuum. And this, in turn, prevents us from responding differently to misused or incorrectly cited sources in texts by undergraduate and graduate students and novice and more experienced scholars. Finally, it prevents us from developing the pedagogies and mentoring strategies that would help novice academic writers move from observing talking heads on a screen to participating in the exchange of Burke's parlour. The first step is to understand the negative consequences of focusing on the actions of the "Plagiarist" rather than the complexities of the text.

Why we focus on the plagiarist

Approaching the use of sources as an ethical litmus test in which we assume others, especially students, to be willing to cheat rather than do the work necessary to digest and reproduce source material in some form of dialogue has

two regrettable outcomes. First, we set up a relationship to knowledge based on institutional control through the use and acknowledgement of information and ideas as citation practices. This leads instructors to distrust students, replacing the idealized model of co-learners with one of authority and submission. Second, and worse still, it forces us to spend what little time we can devote to the work of each student checking for originality or looking for plagiarism rather than encouraging thought and the moves necessary for academic conversation and knowledge creation. The focus on the plagiarist as subject, with or without agency, allows researchers to accumulate data about the extent of what Donald McCabe et al. (2001) call "cheating behavior." This does have the value of alerting us to a problem that obviously needs to be addressed and one whose subtle magnitude is only now becoming visible. But when identifying and counting plagiarists becomes the end in itself, researchers may inadequately define plagiarism or define it too broadly and thereby count activities that reflect the values of their discipline of study rather than a broader and agreed-upon standard. This, in turn, can lead to desire for more data about and focus on "the plagiarist" without the textual and contextual information that reveals the developing intertextuality in which plagiarism occurs.

In one early study of STEM graduate student source use, Judith Swazey et al. (1993) asked faculty and graduate students to report observations of a number of ethical violations, including plagiarism, although they did not define that term beyond separating it from "falsification of data" (1993, p. 544). Despite being published in 1993 the study is still widely cited, suggesting ongoing focus on such data. Two decades later, another study of STEM graduate students by Irene Glendinning (2014) revealed that understanding of what constitutes plagiarism and acceptable intertextuality practices varies considerably. Such analysis helps us identify the nuance necessary to move the focus from the negatively defined "plagiarist" to the more neutral "writer;" however, that same desire to understand what constitutes plagiarism in different contexts carries with it the risk of other kinds of generalization. For example, Glendinning describes students from Germany and Finland reporting that they were "encouraged to directly embed writing of their supervisor in their own work" (2014, p. 17) and believed it to be an acceptable practice although in other contexts it would be plagiarism. Similarly, Diane Pecorari (2003) describes three of the seventeen L2 graduate students she studied including uncited passages from their advisor (2003, p. 336), yet to generalize anything about standards in individual education sectors or populations from such interviews and reports is at best misleading.

Such studies highlight the risk of assuming that definitions of plagiarism are shared universally or even locally and also of expecting that everyone within a given context interprets those standards in the same way. They also remind us that even when we try to understand writers rather than simply counting plagiarists we cannot do so outside of the very local context in which the writing occurred, including the audience for which it is intended—and what the writer (often incorrectly) assumes to be the expectations of the audience. While it is true that our students may be parroting back what they hear as they navigate Burke's

parlour, we learn the most from observing that act of navigation itself and understanding the moments when it fails as part of a continuum that also includes the moments when it succeeds. A focus on failed intertextuality too often obscures the emerging conversation and the opportunity for mentorship; while it does reveal a need for change, it does not help us formulate that change.

Before we can develop strategies for this kind of mentoring, we need fuller understanding of the texts produced by our intertextuality practices. We need to listen to those in the parlour as they in turn listen to others, and focus on the text of that interaction rather than the transgressions. Separating the text from the author allows us to study that text *as text*, not as evidence of possible crime. While Swazey et al. (1993) and Glendinning (2014) focus on the errant behaviour of the writer and so reveal concerns we need to address, Pecorari (2003) simply describes what she found in the texts she coded and the interviews she conducted, noting that "which examples deserve the label 'plagiarism' is a question which is likely to attract diverse answers" (2003, p. 325). This allows her to explore her findings through different theories and seek deeper understanding of what she saw in the texts she collected. If our response focuses only on the plagiarists and their crimes, we feed into the popular notion of what Bruce Macfarlane (2017) calls "moral panic," encouraging a pedagogy designed to catch plagiarists, not teach writing and evolving intertextuality practices as Macfarlane and others recommend.

The benefits of focusing on the text

Focus on individual textual features helps us define plagiarism and suggests some ways to respond. Joshua Landau (2003) notes that the 2001 style guide of the American Psychological Association (APA) says only that "psychologists do not present substantial portions or elements of another's work or data as their own, even if the other work or data is cited occasionally" (American Psychological Association, 2001, p. 395), critiquing it for focusing on *authorial behaviour*. By not defining what is meant by "substantial portions" or providing examples of appropriate use, he observes that it fails to offer real guidance to those who would judge the appropriateness of their own work or that of others. This shift from what the author did (or intended) to the shape of the text itself is important because it allows us to consider concrete examples of what intertextuality looks like, which we can then use both as models of academic prose and as a base for deeper research and understanding.

Swazey et al. (1993), Pecorari (2003), and Glendinning (2014) all studied graduate students, novice academic writers with strong incentive to learn the discourse conventions of their chosen disciplines, and especially the intertextuality practices that could deny them entry to an academic profession. Yet they failed to master those conventions. Armed with this knowledge, we can shift our focus from the act of plagiarism to what the texts produced by those engaging

with sources can teach us about emerging intertextuality practices. Knowing how graduate students struggle gives us insight into the work of undergraduates, who have less intrinsic incentive to learn academic conventions and who also tend to be more clumsy writers whose missteps are more visible. While Pecorari (2003) and Serviss (2017) focused on both coded texts and student interviews, larger transcontextual studies focusing only on the texts provide a broad snapshot of intertextuality practices that allows useful generalizations across contexts. In turn, such research generates follow-up studies to help us understand these data from the writer's perspective. But first we need to observe the broad spectrum of intertextuality practices revealed when we look for more than just for plagiarism.

Text-only research of this kind is being conducted by the Citation Project, whose first large-scale study focused on the intertextuality practices of undergraduates in first-year writing classes at sixteen US institutions of higher education ranging from two-year colleges to Ivy-League and research-focused universities (Jamieson & Howard, 2013). Working from Howard's (1993) initial exploration of patchwriting in undergraduate papers and a pilot study of student papers from one institution (Howard, Serviss, & Rodrigue, 2010), Jamieson and Howard created a corpus of papers that could be coded using citation context coding (modelled on that of Linda Smith, 1981). Research so far has explored textual incorporation methods for cited material—whether the students summarized, paraphrased, patchwrote, quoted, or copied cited sources (Jamieson & Howard, 2013). It has also analysed the type of sources used by students (Jamieson, 2016) and their difficulty level (Jamieson, 2013). Among other things, this research reveals levels of patchwriting that are aligned with non-naturalistic studies of undergraduate students by Miguel Roig (1999, 2001) and a focus on the sentence level that confirms the study by Howard et al. (2010). It also reveals a slippage between paraphrase and cited patchwriting that calls for further research and suggests pedagogical interventions that would help novice writers.

Separating the author from the text is not such a simple process though. While we might assume we can focus completely on the text without the distraction that comes from knowledge of or assumptions about the author, we do not escape our beliefs and values quite so easily. As Pecorari (2003) observes, when working with known writers we are less likely to identify a text as plagiarized if we perceive the student to be "diligent and honest" (p. 342) and plagiarism to be the opposite. While Pecorari was talking about real knowledge of the author by familiars such as supervisors, this phenomenon, known as the halo effect (Nisbett & Wilson, 1997), applies to readers who make assumptions about the author based only on the text as well. Citation Project coders revealed this tendency. When texts were well written overall—marking the students as "good" writers—coders were less likely to mark passages of failed paraphrase as "patchwriting" and, (more troubling) the same was true in reverse with more passages miscoded as patchwriting in papers exhibiting more error. The implications are significant for researchers who depend on coding and for instructors required to report plagiarism. Both

groups are at risk of confirmation bias, believing stronger writers to also be more adept at producing original text and therefore finding them to be so, and *vice versa*. Our feelings about and negative judgements toward the plagiarist colour the way we see text as well as writers, and must be guarded against. Coder reliability increased when Citation Project researchers removed all negative language from their definition of "patchwriting," shifting it from a description of *what a writer did* to one of *what a text includes* (Jamieson & Howard, 2013, p. 121, p. 132). In the value-neutral definition, the text "restates a phrase, clause, or one or more sentences while staying close to the language or syntax of the source" (CitationProject.net).

Understanding paraphrase

The example of text coded by the Citation Project in Figure 8.1 shows successful and failed paraphrase (patchwriting) in two consecutive sentences taken from page six of a paper in the Citation Project Researched Writing (CPRW) corpus. The paraphrase is not a model—the speaker is not introduced until the end and the student is working with two sentences from the source, which does not leave much room for originality—but it is a good example of the typical moves students make as they paraphrase at the sentence level. The source begins by identifying 1996 as a significant date in the history of medical marijuana. In contrast, the student begins with a statement in original language about increased interest in research on cannabis in general over a decade. This is followed by support for that claim using information from the article in a different order and as part of a broader discussion on marijuana research. A few words are repeated, and the three-word string "on the subject" could be rewritten; however, "journal article," "scientific," and "published" could not. In all, the one-sentence paraphrase repeats ten words, two dates, and two numbers from the two sentences in the source text; 24 of the 38 words and numbers in the student text are original. In sharp contrast, the same student's next sentence (also in Figure 8.1) stays too close to the source. The student takes one 47-word sentence from elsewhere on the same page of the source and turns it into two sentences, also totalling 47 words. Of those, 29 are the same. A further four are modified by adding "s" or "ing," and seven are substitutions (such as "now" for "also," and "prevention" for "inhibition"). That leaves seven original words. The stark difference between the two examples of source use exemplifies what I define as "patchwriting" in this chapter. The juxtaposition of weak paraphrase and patchwriting from the same source also raises questions about intent and ability.

The text identified in Figure 8.1 as "patchwriting" may also be called plagiarized using other definitions, highlighting the problem identified by Glendinning (2014). For example, speaking of what she terms "disguised plagiarism," Debora Weber-Wulff (2014) explains that "simply changing words around or inserting or deleting a phrase. . . does not result in original work, but an edited work, and thus it is still plagiarism" (2014, p. 8). In contrast, the Council of Writing

	Student text (consecutive sentences from page 6 of paper)	**Source text (page 2 of 'Recent Research on Medical Marijuana')**
(1) Paraphrase	Evidence of a jump in interest can be seen in a jump from **258 journal articles** that were **published** in **1996 on the subject** of cannabis, to **over 2,100 studies** that were **published** in **scientific** journals in **2008** (Recent Research on Medicinal Marijuana).	A keyword search using the terms 'cannabis, **1996** (the year California voters became the first of 14 states to allow for the drug's medical use under state law) reveals just **258** scientific **journal articles published on the subject** during that year. Perform this same search for the year **2008,** and one will find **over 2,100 published** scientific **studies**.
(2) Patchwriting	Most importantly, **investigators are now studying the anti-cancer properties of** cannabiniods. There is an **increasing amount of preclinical and clinical data** that conclude **that cannabinoids stop the spreading of specific cancer cells through programmed cell death and the prevention of** the forming **of new blood vessels** (Recent Research on Medicinal Marijuana).	. . . . **Investigators are also studying the anti-cancer activities of** cannabis, as a **growing body of preclinical and clinical data** concludes **that cannabinoids** can **reduce the spread of specific cancer cells via** apoptosis **(programmed cell death) and** by **the inhibition of** angiogenesis **(the formation of new blood vessels)**.
	STUDENT CITATION: "Recent Research on Medical Marijuana." *NORML*. April 1, 2009. http://norml.org/index.cfm?Group_ID=7002	

Figure 8.1 Sample from source text and student paper, with marginal coding indicating how the source is being used

In each text, words copied directly from the source are in bold and underlined with a single line, modifications are indicated with wavy underline, and substitutions are highlighted

Program Administrators (WPA) 2005 definition focuses not on originality but authorial intention, so because the source is cited, the copying would be considered unintentional; bad writing, but not "plagiarism." Regardless of the intent of the student or the label placed on the intertextuality practice, texts such as the one in Figure 8.1 make some of the moves necessary for an academic conversation even as they ultimately fail. We see similar failure in paragraphs produced by faculty and students when asked to paraphrase a source (Roig, 1999, 2001), in low-stakes graduate school STEM research proposals (Gilmore et al., 2010) and MA students' papers (Serviss, 2017), in high-stakes research papers (Jamieson & Howard, 2013), in academic articles, and in writing produced by English language learners (Pecorari, 2003; Pennycook, 1996). In each case, if we focus on the text and the *preparedness* of the writer rather than the *ethics* of that writer, we

can begin to understand the process of textual production and design pedagogies to teach and mentor writers as they develop.

Rethinking expectations

As the halo effect shows, there is sometimes a difference between what we think we are doing/seeing and what we actually do/see. If we associate patchwriting with writers who exhibit error, we are more likely to see it in their papers (Jamieson & Howard, 2013). If we hold a high opinion of the writer from personal knowledge, we are less likely to believe they misused sources (Pecorari, 2003). If we focus on finding plagiarists, we will have less time for pedagogical interventions (Howard & Jamieson, 2013). If we believe students learn to incorporate sources over time and without significant mentoring, even those of us who take a pedagogical approach in the first year are less likely to do so when we see patchwriting in the work of college seniors, graduate students, or early career academics. Closer analysis suggests that this expectation may be the most important to change. We need to reject the notion that simply listing rules in handbooks, handouts, and guides is sufficient to prevent plagiarism—and that failure to use sources correctly once that information has been shared demonstrates a lack of ethics rather than a lack of skill. A focus on observed intertextuality practices reveals the complexity of working with sources and the skills that must be actively taught to allow participation in Burke's parlour. Armed with this understanding, we can think of intertextuality practices as a continuum and the role of teachers as guides or mentors along that continuum.

The separation between what students (and instructors) know and what they do has been explored by psychologist Miguel Roig in several studies of intertextuality practices. In his first study, Roig (1997) asked 316 undergraduates to differentiate between plagiarized and correctly paraphrased passages, reporting that while 76% could recognize successful paraphrase, 50% also identified a "plagiarized" (patchwritten) passage as paraphrase (1997, p. 116). Based on that research, Roig asserts that 60% of undergraduates cannot tell the difference between plagiarism and acceptable paraphrase (1999, p. 974). In a second study, 196 students from two colleges were asked to paraphrase the same two-sentence paragraph used in 1997, as they would in a college paper. Text like this, produced artificially for the researcher, offers different insights than naturalistically produced text like that coded by the Citation Project because the writers have no incentive to deceive; nevertheless, 46% of the paragraphs stuck too close to the source, with only a few words changed, added, or omitted (1999, p. 976). When Roig also counted word strings of five or more words, he found 68% of the paragraphs were too close to the source (1999, p. 978). If we combine the three student-generated sentences in Figure 8.1, the total percentage of material from the source is 58%. Although they appear consecutively in the paper, the three sentences draw from two different parts of the page in the source text and at 85 words are longer than Roig's 58-word

sample so they cannot be compared exactly, but the similarity of the finding across contexts and in naturalistically and artificially produced texts adds to the argument that cited patchwriting is both common and not a deliberate attempt to deceive.

Using the categories exemplified in Figure 8.1, Citation Project researchers report that patchwriting was observed at least once in 91 of the 174 papers (52%), and that 26 papers included at least one extended passage copied directly from the source and cited but not marked as quotation, with 16 papers including both (Jamieson & Howard 2013, p. 123). Using Roig's expanded classification, the data reveals 98 of the papers (56%) remaining too close to the source by patchwriting or copying strings of five or more words at least once. The study does not include the number of words involved in each method of source integration, so cannot be compared to Roig's paragraphs, but the examples in Figure 8.1 are representative. The fact that more than half of the extracts studied by Citation Project researchers incorporated source material in ways that many find transgressive should be evidence of the need for more realistic expectations of intertextuality practices in first-year college students and for pedagogies to scaffold their development. Indeed, Howard and Jamieson argue that extended research papers should not be assigned in the first few years of college, when students should be learning how to read critically and integrate ideas from one or two sources into a coherent text instead (Howard & Jamieson, 2013). Roig's findings also highlight the need for new approaches, revealing the inadequacy of existing pedagogies designed to move students beyond what they know as first-years (at least in the two institutions from which he drew his sample). In a second part of the 1999 study in which a different 196 students were asked to paraphrase an easier source, Roig found first- and second-year students to have patchwritten in 31% of the samples compared with 26% in the texts produced by juniors and seniors (1999, p. 979).

Moving beyond undergraduates we might expect more sophisticated methods of incorporating text in the work of graduate students. Preliminary research by Tricia Serviss (2017) suggests otherwise. Using Citation Project coding on papers produced by 10 graduate students in a teacher education course, she found 14 instances of patchwriting out of 86 citations (16%) in papers written in their first term in the program, and 22 out of 128 citations (17%) in writing by those same students in their second term after discussion of their papers. Although in the second term the students were better at identifying patchwriting when they coded their own papers, correctly flagging 11 of the 22 instances (2017, p. 112), their prose still slipped between patchwriting and paraphrase (Serviss, 2017) like that of the undergraduates studied by Jamieson and Howard (2013).

Gilmore et al. (2010) also studied texts produced across time, although without focused instruction in the interval. They collected ungraded pre- and post-proposals written by masters- and doctoral-level students in six STEM disciplines at three different US institutions and coded the effectiveness with which the texts incorporated source material. Unlike Jamieson and Howard

(2013) and Serviss (2017), they did not distinguish between "inadequate paraphrasing of a limited number of sentences" (2010, p. 18) and more obviously plagiarized proposals that included "major chunks of [copied and pasted] text without any citation" (2010, p. 19), terming both "plagiarism." Using this classification, they found that 41 of the 109 pre-proposals (36%) and 23 of the 54 post-proposals (43%) included plagiarism (2010, p. 19). This number is higher than the 27% plagiarism rate in Mark McCullough and Melissa Holmberg's (2005) study of 210 electronically submitted masters' theses from 22 institutions, although the difference between the studies and definitions may account for this. McCullough and Holmberg used Google to search *exact* "undocumented phrases. . . against the World Wide Web" for a total of ten minutes (2005, p. 435), inevitably failing to uncover what Gilmore et al. term "inadequate paraphrase" (2010, p. 18). In contrast, Serviss reports that all 10 students in her study patchwrote at least once in both of the samples coded, a number possibly skewed by the small sample from one course at one institution (Serviss, 2017), but still contributing to the developing picture of intertextuality practices.

While we lack demographic information in many of these studies, there has been significant research into source integration methods employed by international students (L2), especially in Europe. In her study of 493 passages written by international graduate students in the United Kingdom, Pecorari (2003) found at least 50% of the words to be copied from the source passage without citation. In all, 44% of the passages copied at least 40% of the words from the source. What we are seeing here, then, is that the transition to post-graduate studies does not magically confer the intertextuality practices missing in undergraduates. While the percentage of students producing patchwritten or otherwise imperfect examples of Burke's parlour is smaller at the graduate level, it is not absent.

Studies of professional writers and college professors add to the picture. Provisional research by Maja Curcic and Georgi Boychev (2012) reveals a similar frequency of patchwriting in texts produced by professional writers as by college students (2012, p. 19). They found patchwriting in 17 of the 20 texts they analysed, but also found high incidences of paraphrase in both (p. 18), a finding in line with the other studies here. These findings should come as no surprise when we review Roig's (2001) study, which repeated his 1997 and 1999 studies of undergraduates with 201 full- and part-time professors from a range of US institution types and disciplines. They, like the students, did not agree about which of the samples met the definition of plagiarism and which were acceptable (2001, p. 313), even within one discipline. Similarly, when asked to paraphrase the same two-sentence paragraph used in the earlier studies "in a way that would not be classified as plagiarism" (2001, p. 314), 30% of the professors either copied strings of up to eight words at a time or reversed the order of copied material. He concludes that what "a significant" number of professors identify as acceptable paraphrase "may be viewed by some of their colleagues as plagiarism" (2001, p. 315) and that there is a similarly wide disparity in their paraphrasing practices (2001, p. 319).

Understanding context

This research suggests strongly that simply tracking source use will not help us come up with a working description of what constitutes acceptable intertextuality practices or a shared definition of successful paraphrase. Before we can work on such definitions and descriptions we need to understand why people incorporate source ideas as they do. We also need a deeper understanding of anomalies like the fact that the more paraphrase there is in a sample, the more patchwriting there is also. Do examples of failed paraphrase (patchwriting) like those in Figure 8.1 result from writers struggling with those passages more than others as Roig's (1999, 2001) comparison between paraphrase of simple and difficult texts suggests? Or is the shift back and forth between paraphrase and patchwriting reported by Jamieson and Howard (2013), Jamieson (2013), and Serviss (2017) less easily explained? Similarly, are distortions in meaning of apparently paraphrased texts (Roig, 1997, 1999, 2001) part of a continuum in which students first produce paraphrase that fails to be sufficiently original (patchwriting) and then paraphrase that fails to actually capture the meaning of the source text, before finally learning to capture the ideas of others accurately in original language? Textual analysis precipitates these questions, and contextual understanding helps us assess their relevance as we explore appropriate pedagogies (and policies).

Several of the studies already cited used mixed methods research, supplementing textual analysis with surveys, questionnaires, or interviews with participants. This supplemental information helps us understand the textual data, providing contextual information about the writers and thereby allowing for a more nuanced understanding of their intertextuality practices. Pecorari (2003), for example, spent considerable time talking with nine of the seventeen participants in her study and also interviewed their supervisors, noting that while some of the students had some doubts about the accuracy of their citations, none revealed an intention to deceive. Like WPA and other professional organizations and institutions, Pecorari considers this issue of intent to deceive an essential part of the definition of plagiarism, in spite of the difficulty of measuring intent (2003, p. 334; this volume). Defining their work as "non-prototypical plagiarism" (2003, p. 319), she notes that her findings are in line with other studies showing students to be likely to misuse sources until they learn how to use them in a sanctioned manner. This assertion is strengthened by her interviews, which reveal students trying to extrapolate rules from their observations—although not always succeeding (p. 339).

Serviss (2017) also focused on the interaction between graduate students and their texts, grounding source-based writing coded using Citation Project

methods within a series of interviews and reflective writing to invite students to understand their own intertextuality practices and the process of entering into the discipline (2017, p. 110). Her research did not simply study what the students did; she also shared her findings with them in a move designed to scaffold their developing intertextuality practices. While all of the students patchwrote at least once in both of the samples, taken in two consecutive terms, the number of incidences of patchwriting increased in the second sample. This might seem to challenge the assertion that more experienced writers develop more sophisticated intertextuality practices, but in fact it reveals the complexity of the process of developing academic writing skills. Serviss reports that her students were very concerned about the incidences of patchwriting, but they were also surprised by the amount of quotation revealed by the coding. Despite believing paraphrase and summary to be markers of successful engagement of source material and seeing evidence of that in the sources they read, the students realized for the first time how much their own papers relied on quotation and in interviews indicated a desire to change that. In the second samples, they employed more paraphrase (27% compared with 16% in the first sample) and summary (up to 12% from 8%), and perhaps inevitably also produced more failed paraphrase (patchwriting) in the process (2017, p. 112). Serviss' research reveals graduate students in the process of learning academic conventions in all of the messiness and complexity that process entails, and as they worked on incorporating source material in their own words, they sometimes fell short.

Gilmore et al. (2010) reached a similar conclusion in their study of masters- and doctoral-level students. Like Serviss (2017), they found more of what they term "unintentional plagiarism" in the second sample they collected at the end of the students' research process (up from 36.4% in the pre-proposals to 42.6% in the post-proposals). They also note a reduction in the amount of unintentional plagiarism in the post-proposals of the ten students (out of 55) who also submitted pre-proposals (2010, p. 17), suggesting that thinking of the two reports as part of a process was beneficial. One aspect of Gilmore et al.'s study was to trace the impact of enculturation in terms of time in the program and familiarity with expectations. They used the inclusion of primary research as a marker of disciplinary enculturation (2010, p. 16), and found more unintentional plagiarism in the samples that included fewer primary sources, indicating less understanding of disciplinary expectations and less facility with disciplinary practices. As students incorporated more primary sources, incidences of unintentional plagiarism declined. There was also less unintentional plagiarism in the pre- and post-reports of students who had been in the program an additional term.

The impact of reading difficulty

Gilmore et al.'s (2010) suggestion of a connection between the difficulty level of primary sources and the ability to incorporate them into writing echoes other studies. The belief that there is a correlation between reading ability and

patchwriting is intuitive and often asserted. It was suggested by Glynda Hull and Mike Rose (1989) discussing developmental writers and Howard repeated it (1993, 1995) in response to writing by a cohort of more prepared students. Indeed, it is this belief that led Howard to identify patchwriting as part of a writing process (1993), a developmental stage rather than an attempt to deceive or evidence of an ethical lapse. Roig's (1999, 2001) research also supports the same claim, with both undergraduates and college professors patchwriting less when asked to paraphrase a simple two-sentence paragraph from an introduction to a psychology textbook in comparison to the more complex sentences from the *Bulletin of the Psychonomic Society*. Like Roig (1999, 2001), researchers test this claim using measures of textual difficulty (usually Flesch-Kincaid grade-level analysis or the Flesch reading difficulty test) either alone or in combination with source type, rather than only type of source as did Gilmore et al. (2010).

Jamieson and Howard (2013) also coded sources by type and reading difficulty, but found no significant correlations with paraphrase or patchwriting, suggesting that readability and difficulty level alone do not account for how students use sources in naturalistic settings (see Figure 8.2). When coded using Flesch and Flesch-Kincaid measures, the 930 sources in the Citation Project study ranged in reading ease from below 29, ranked as "very confusing," to 80, which is classified as "easy" (Flesch, 1948). Figure 8.2 shows the most common Flesch score for the sources cited was 42, which is classified as "college level – difficult" (Flesch, 1948), *The Wall Street Journal* and the *Harvard Business Review* both score 43 and the *New York Times* scores 39. At a Flesch-Kincaid grade level of 15.6, Roig's "difficult" source would score 28.3 using the Flesch reading difficulty scale, what Flesch defines as "very confusing." Sentence length is part of the Flesch formula, so this difficulty rating may be skewed by the two-sentence source. Source length may also explain the disparity between Roig's findings and Citation Project data. Roig's subjects appear to have read those two sentences; students working with longer sources like those in Figure 8.2 may not have read so carefully.

Valentine's (2001) interviews reveal students mining sources for quotations rather than reading linearly and deriving material to be incorporated into their papers from notes, and Rowlands et al. (2008) report readers from undergraduates to professors reading digitized sources in a "shallow, horizontal, 'flicking'" way (2008, p. 300), reading only a few pages from each text on scholarly sites and "power browsing" (2008, p. 306). Similarly, Howard et al. (2010) found students working from sentences, reading one sentence in the source and noting its content and then reading the next, rather than reading and reproducing the ideas in several sentences or whole paragraphs, a finding also replicated in the Citation Project study (Jamieson & Howard, 2013), and demonstrated in Figure 8.1 where the student took one sentence from the source and made it into two. Combined, these data could explain why the Citation Project study did not find reading difficulty to have a significant impact. If the students were not working to absorb and reproduce ideas from blocks of text longer than one

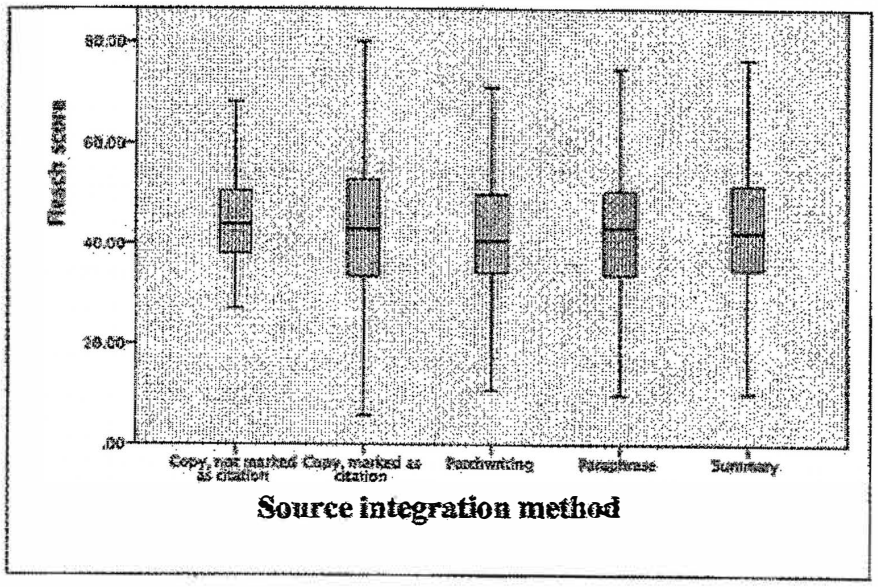

Figure 8.2 Correlation between Flesch Reading Ease score and source integration method for 1,911 citations to 930 sources (a score of 30–49 is classified as "college level – difficult")

or two sentences at a time, the difficulty of the text may be less relevant. Indeed, these studies suggest that the intertextuality practices discussed in this chapter did not result from word- and sentence-level reading difficulty but from ineffective reading *strategies*. Professors can extract meaning while reading as Rowlands et al. (2008) describe, slowing down and reading more deeply when necessary. In contrast, students may not have the time, inclination, or awareness to read deeply (Howard et al., 2010), engaging with source material in a cursory and incomplete way instead (Jamieson, 2013).

While simple measures of reading difficulty do not predict the specific methods of source integration in the Citation Project study, they may explain the slippage between paraphrase and patchwriting revealed there and in other studies (Curcic & Boychev, 2012; Howard et al., 2010; Roig, 1999, 2001; Serviss, 2017). If students at any level work at the edge of their ability, it makes sense that they would not be able to distance themselves enough to render the words of others into new language in every instance. Alice Horning (2011) and other reading theorists call for us to teach reading strategies that present texts "as part of an on-going conversation about key issues or ideas in a discipline" (2011), helping students develop the sophisticated reading and researching skills faculty assume students already possess (Leckie 1996; Schwegler & Shamoon, 1982). The belief

that we become more sophisticated readers as we age and move through the process of higher education is so fundamental that we do not think about the consequences of this on source-based writing. Flesch-Kincaid itself measures reading difficulty by age, grade, and education level. If we can accept that reading skills are tied to the developmental stage of the reader (regardless of how linearly they read), it seems obvious that intertextuality practices will similarly develop with time and expertise and like reading, need to be taught.

Enculturation and mentoring: An invitation to the parlour

Howard describes patchwriting as "an outsider's membership application, a way of acquiring the language of the target community" (1993, p. 240). She suggests that the challenge is in rendering cognitively difficult text into academic language. This corresponds with the argument by David Bartholomae (1985) that every time they write, students must "invent" the university, imagining an audience and purpose that may not have been explained and for which they may not have written before. Research by Head and Eisenberg (2010) and Elizabeth Kleinfeld (2017) reveals that students must also "invent" a purpose for their researched writing. Based on their study of 191 research assignments from 28 US colleges, Head and Eisenberg (2010) found an emphasis on the mechanics of research but a lack of explanation of why source-based writing was being assigned, how students might engage with their sources, or what their intertextuality should look like (just what they should avoid). Kleinfeld (2017) expanded the study to include syllabi and other course documents, but still found no effort to enculturate students into the world of research represented by the image of Burke's parlour, although the descriptions appear to expect them to do so.

The first step for teachers and mentors of writers, then, is to expect a much more limited form of intertextuality from novice writers than from expert, just as we do with reading and skills. The second step is to develop pedagogical strategies that will help writers acquire the language and intertextuality practices necessary for successful source-based writing. We can teach effective reading skills (Horning, 2011; Jamieson, 2013), summary writing (Howard, 1993; Kirkland & Saunders, 1991; Sherrard, 1986; Winograd, 1984), and research skills (Howard & Jamieson, 2013). We can explain our purpose using suggestions from Head and Eisenberg (2010). But we also have to accept that failed paraphrase (patchwriting of all kinds, cited or not) is an attempt by writers to produce successful paraphrase, and that the process of learning to listen to ideas, absorb them, and then reproduce them in dialogue with other ideas takes time and is complex. Finally, we need to be realistic about how easy it is for even the most skilled writers to slip from paraphrase to patchwriting as they engage with the ideas of others. If we can reject the obsession with cheating and learn to approach misused sources

at all levels as evidence of inadequate academic enculturation, we will be able to employ strategies to teach our students and mentor our peers so they may engage as fully as possible in the vigorous academic discussion represented by the image of Burke's parlour and continue to develop as they do so.

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