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**INPUT, UPTAKE, OUTPUT:
A STUDY OF INTERTEXTUAL SOURCE USE
IN ACADEMIC WRITING**

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ABSTRACT

Research in writing has moved from writing to learn to writing from sources. This represents a move to considering writing not just as an isolated activity, but one associated with acquisition and representation of knowledge from different forms of texts. Research on sources to date has focused on a limited number of inputs, mainly one or two sources, in relation to the target product. In contrast, the present study investigates a wide range of sources students use as material for their studies. This naturalistic study investigates sources used by different groups of students, (L1 writers, L2 writers; expert L1 writers, novice L1 writers), and their ability to integrate these inputs in written text. The research was conducted within the context of an academic course and followed a pilot study trialling pedagogical and data gathering procedures. The primary data was in-class essays annotated by students to indicate source use. The essays were analysed structurally by a coding scheme adapted from the work of Christensen (1966), Mann & Thompson (1988), and Hyland (1990). Secondary data was obtained through pre-course and post-course questionnaires and included information on students' cultural and linguistic experience, their perceived usefulness of particular sources in the course, and their attitude towards writing tutorials.

Results indicated that there were differences in the way the identified groups of students accessed the varying sources. While the lecture remained the primary input for all students, the manner and extent students used personal experience was demonstrated in different ways. Results showed L1 students integrated a wider range of sources in their writing. The differing patterns of source use indicated that students followed different pathways in developing text, and that the strategies they used had consequences for their text construction. As an extension of this, a hierarchy of personal experience in writing was established: 1 personal narrative; 2 untransformed narrative; 3 integration of personal knowledge with concept and discipline knowledge. Findings also indicated the difficulties less proficient writers

had in moving beyond the writer-oriented narrative form which is consistent with other research (Leki 1995, Flower in Leeds, 1996). There are a number of factors that appear relevant to explaining the different pathways. These include language proficiency, writing expertise, content and schema knowledge, and perceived saliency or interestingness of the task and topic.

The results of the present research points to the fact that these and other affective factors deserve further research attention. Such research could possibly affect the pedagogical achievements of learning experiences in academic courses.

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