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Porter #1 – Short Write

Intertextuality and the Discourse Community

Based solely on the first page of Porter’s “Intertextuality and the Discourse Community,” along with the preface, I have gathered the concise definition of intertextuality set forth. I believe intertextuality relates to the use of previously authored writings or experiences in a piece. If I were to write a letter to my aunt thanking her for a book that she had sent me to read, I would undoubtedly cite the work several times not only to assure her that I had given the book my attention, but to also inform her that I had received some level of insight or understanding from the experience. Several such letters have been composed, and I am certain that I have never once properly cited the referenced text. This is intertextuality. The conversation was instigated over and directed by the book; without which the letters would never need be sent. Thus, a vast amount of material that is generated references existing material by this intertextuality and is made better by it for having an existing foothold and reference in bodies of text.

After reading the article, my view of intertextuality has altered. Intertextuality (how many times have you read that word today?) is not only a specific reference to another’s material, it is writing, the entire gamut of English composition as acknowledged by readers. Text is intertextual. Every word and phrase is interpreted by previously witnessed context and usage. As words are used, they evolve; and as a reader interprets context, so does his or her understanding of the word. Intertextuality spans from the usage of existing ideas, methods, and structures to the utilization of diction itself. The way in which intertext is interpreted and summed to the overall language is not uniform and is in fact very individual, with each person who belongs to a language interpreting it differently based on the materials read. If I were to write an article that discusses, in no short detail, the methods used to access remote website servers via the pyloris software, there would be a very limited audience of readers who would interpret the paper as I intended. Other readers may not readily understand the basis or mentioned materials, but by reading the article, they would receive an entirely different view of the words and ideas through context, which adds to the breadth of intertextuality within the broader discourse groups. Likewise, although I did not recognize several words used in Porter’s article, I have already composed supplementary internal definitions and connotations to the words by intertext and context.