Independent Searching During One-Shot Information Literacy Instruction Sessions: Does It Prepare Students for Research?
Overview

- Background
- Methods
- Results
- Discussion
- The future
Background:

- Undergraduate university
- 8500 FLE Students
- 700+ ILI sessions/year
- Focus on scholarship of teaching and learning (SoTL)
Background:
SoTL + ILI = EBL

- Scholarship of Teaching and Learning
  - “going meta” (Hutchings & Shulman, 1999)
  - Way to connect other scholarly conversations

- Call for using evidence to improve and change librarians’ teaching (e.g. Bundy, 2004; Elmborg, 2006; Smith, 2001)
Background: Research Beginnings

- Reformatted classes
- Focused on increasing students’ search time during class

Assumption: independent search time is useful
Background: Research Question

- Is giving students time to work independently on their research during a one-shot information literacy instruction session, combined with scaffolding, an effective way to prepare students to do individual research?
Methods: Web Survey

- 1st, 2nd, 3rd year students
- Administered at end of class
- Questions about
  - Previous experience
  - Preparedness before and after
  - Most useful part of session
## Methods:

### Research Log

**Topic/Thesis Statement:** ____________________________

**Ideas/Concepts (and synonyms and words related to ideas/concepts):** ____________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Today’s Date</th>
<th>Resource Used (e.g. Academic Search Complete)</th>
<th>Keywords/Search (e.g. “global warming” and ocean* in keywords)</th>
<th>Resources Found (e.g. Good results, e-mailed Smith &amp; Jones article)</th>
<th>Notes to Self (e.g. will try synonyms for global warming)</th>
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Methods:
Semi-Structured Interviews

- Conducted after research assignment handed in

Questions
- Research process
- Information literacy instruction session experience
- Preparation to do research independently
Caveats and Limitations

- One interview participant
- Reliance on student-recorded data
Results: Web Surveys

- 73 responses

- Students preparation
  - 41% felt prepared/somewhat prepared before
  - 100% felt prepared/somewhat prepared after

- Most useful
  - #1 – Individual help from librarian
  - #2 – Discussion of how to use resources
  - … #8 (tied) – Time to work independently
Results:
Research Logs

- 83 responses

- Topic/Thesis
  - 54% no articulated focus

- Search Complexity
  - 3.1 searches (range 1-9)
  - 3.7 words/search (range 1-9)
  - Boolean (68%), truncation (30%), phrase searching (25%)
Results:
Research Logs

- Did not demonstrate what was taught – 17%
- Progression – 68%
- Search query modifications
  - Change vocabulary – 77%
  - Add/subtract terms – 62%
  - Changes resource – 37%
- Feedback – 48%
- Self Reflection – 23%
## Results: Composite Example

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Resource Used</th>
<th>Keywords/Search</th>
<th>Resources Found</th>
<th>Notes to Self</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Medline</td>
<td>Korsakoff’s Syndrome</td>
<td>Overwhelming, 4000+ articles</td>
<td>Search too broad, use MeSH</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medline</td>
<td>(MM “Korsakoff Syndrome”)</td>
<td>1800+ articles</td>
<td>Need to find cause, add “etiology”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medline</td>
<td>(MM “Korsakoff Syndrome”) and etiology</td>
<td>500+ articles</td>
<td>Limit to review articles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medline</td>
<td>(MM “Korsakoff Syndrome”) and etiology + review articles</td>
<td>60 results, 5 good articles</td>
<td>Better results, can’t get PDF – will have to order</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Discussion:

Highlights

- Students’ searching is fairly simple (Markey, 2007)
  - Varies in simplicity

- Many students are using (learning?) what is taught

- Many students demonstrate change in their searching over the ILI session

But…

- Students are not reflective about their searching
Discussion:

Highlights

- Lack of reflection due to class constraints?
- However, focusing on skills, not higher-order thinking
  - Creating thesis statement
  - Self reflection
  - Search progression
  - Using feedback
The Future: Impact on Practice

- Students demonstrate (learn?) what I teach ➔ rethink what I teach

- Importance of integrating ILI into curriculum
  - Teaching for knowledge and greater understanding of the discipline
The Future: Research

- Considering reworking and rerunning the study
  - Look at integrated ILI

- Ways to record student searches
  - Pedagogical and research reasons
Thank You!

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References


