"*Thoughts on information literacy – the dutch context*"

Milano Round table conference
John van de Pas
Saxion Hogescholen, Deventer, The Netherlands

Introduction

John van de Pas

- Lecturer ISM (LIS) at Saxion University for applied sciences
- Stand-in for Ton de Bruyn

Background:

- Historian, Nijmegen University (1993)
- Bachelor of ICT, ISM at Deventer (2005)
- Librarian (1993-1999)
- ICT consultant (1999-2005)

Seeking meaning?

Research shows: students go looking for 'the right answer', are unable to combine information from multiple sources and unwilling to let go of their idea that the internet (e.g. 'google') can provide the answer to all and any questions.

Recent research shows (mo. 13/3)

Alumni (secundary education), arriving at institutions of higher education, in general are found to lack basic information skills:

- Ability to write a consistent text
- Ability to make correct summaries
- Ability to transform information they find into real knowledge of a subject area
- Ability to read, process and select large quantities of information
- Ability to formulate research questions
- Ability to distinguish between quality information and trivia

Result

Dutch higher education institutions are forced into starting 'repair' programs, teaching students basic information literacy skills such as:

- Basic writing skills
- Basic reading skills
- Basic search skills
- Basic research skills

A new market for our LIS professionals?

Information literacy: Dutch context

Albert Boekhorst, Informatievaardigheden (2000, twice reprinted).

LOOWI (University librarians' committee for education in scientific information skills)

- Dutch literature and committee has translated the ACRL competencies, and propose applying them in the Dutch context
- Dutch term for Information Literacy translates as Information *Skills*

Deventer competencies

Our competencies 101 (sources) & 102 (retrieval) cover the
outcomes of ACRL standards
- Determine the extent of information needed
- Access the needed information effectively and efficiently
- Evaluate information and its sources critically
- Incorporate selected information into one's knowledge base
- Use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- Understand the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the
- use of information, and access and use information ethically and legally

Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education, ©
ALA, 2000

Challenge

Our attempts at teaching students information literacy outside a specific subject area fail.

Partly because of the lack of basic skills of new students

Partly because of the lack of subject context

Context is everything!

Information literacy is given meaning in the context it is applied to.

Information literacy cannot be taught outside of a context, a subject. The 'higher', academic skills (other than instrumental skills) cannot be delegated outside the teacher role. Teachers interpret results delivered by students in the context of a professional competency framework. This requires inside knowledge of a subject area.

Although IL seems to be generic in the analysis process, it must be subject-specific in the creation process.

If context is everything?

Do not try to be a teacher-librarian,

but

choose a subject area

And

<u>be a teacher</u>

(period)