Information Literacy in higher education: a meeting point for effective content and tools

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Torrossa Retreat
«Digital publishing: developments and challenges facing academic publishers, libraries and the Casalini Torrossa platform»

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Outline

• Information Literacy: standards and guidelines
• IL in a university context: Milano-Bicocca
• The research process: a holistic approach
• Example search: issues in pedagogy
• Torrossa and IL: searching and SWOT analysis
Following the consolidation of Information Literacy as a concept since the 1990s, guidelines have been created to promote the development of **IL capability and competences** throughout academia.

- ACRL (1989), [Presidential Committee on Information Literacy: Final Report](#)
- ACRL (2000), [Information Literacy Standards for Higher Education](#)
- ACRL (2003), [Guidelines for Instruction Programs in Academic Libraries](#)
- IFLA-UNESCO (2006), [Guidelines on Information Literacy for Lifelong Learning](#)
Information Literacy
Standards and Guidelines [2]

Summary of IFLA and ACRL training guidelines

Aims

- To improve awareness of where to find, how to assess and how to use information
- To develop technical, critical and ethical knowledge and capabilities

Methods

- On-site: courses, visits, mentoring, group work
- Distance learning: guides, tutorial, e-learning platforms

Librarians’ knowledge and skills

- Specialist: librarianship, technological and linguistic knowledge
- Cross-over: communicative, educational and personal skills
IL in a university context
Milano-Bicocca [1]

**On-site** instruction:

- **Basic**
  - First year students
  - Under graduates

- **Intermediate**
  - Under graduates
  - Graduands

- **Advanced**
  - Graduands
  - PHD students
  - Researchers

The aims, content, teaching methods, times and places are determined according to the target group (see programmes).

Reference, training “on request” since 2003 and organization of monthly seminars since 2010 (see Action Research project).
**Distance training** and development of an **E-learning** platform:

- **General guides/tutorial**
  - Search tools
  - and general strategies

- **Specialised guides/tutorial**
  - Discipline-based strategies and search tools
IL in a university context

Milano-Bicocca [3]

Hours dedicated to training and numbers of participants:

+ 750 hours of assistance each year

+ 560 users requiring assistance each year

Resources involved in training: from 3 to 6 librarians with specialist and cross-over skills, for an FTE of 0.3 (average figures 2010-12).

Co-ordination and promotion of didactic activity by the TDC Office.
A Customer Satisfaction survey held in 2012 among 5,231 users showed that:

- the Library has many remote users (18%);
- Library collections are one of the most important features

A similar survey carried out by the Siena University also showed the importance of collections to users.
The research process

A holistic approach

Our adopted model summarizes and reworks the following:
- the BIG6 and SCONUL (Seven Pillars) models
- studies and research by Bruce and Kuhlthau
- proposals made by Jarson and Ballestra.

The research process is split into four parts:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>At the desk</th>
<th>Focus on the subject</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Decide on appropriate strategies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>At the desk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>At the computer</td>
<td>Use search tools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>At the computer and in the Library</td>
<td>Collate bibliography</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Find documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>At the desk and computer</td>
<td>Use documents</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Reflect on the process and end product</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Example search

Issues in pedagogy [1]

Concept map

Disciplinary area
Educational research. Experiences

Subject 4
Teachers-foreign pupils: good practices

Disciplinary area
Educational psychology

Subject 1
Psycho-pedagogical dynamics in the teacher-pupil relationship

Research focus
Teacher-foreign pupil relationship in primary school

Subject 3
Foreign pupils: cognitive and emotional needs

Disciplinary area
Intercultural pedagogy

Subject 2
Primary school children: cognitive and emotional needs

Disciplinary area
Development psychology

Research query
Which educational skills must a primary school teacher develop in order to create the most effective relationship with foreign pupils?
Example search

*Issues in pedagogy* [2]

Term map

- Good Practice*
- Experience*
- Teacher*
- Pupil*
- Child*
- Relation*
- Dynamics
- Ages 5 to 10 Children
- Primary OR Elementary School
- Development AND Identity OR Child*
- Intercultural Educat*
Example search

*Issues in pedagogy [3]*

Types of documents to look for

- **Articles**
  - Subject 1: Psycho-pedagogical dynamics in the teacher-pupil relationship
  - Subject 2: Primary school children: cognitive and emotional needs
  - Subject 3: Foreign pupils: cognitive and emotional needs

- **Books**
  - Subject 4: Teachers-foreign pupils: good practices

- **Grey literature**
  - (study findings, Educational projects)
## Example search

### Issues in pedagogy [4]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects for research and disciplinary context</th>
<th>Documents to look for (What?)</th>
<th>Tools to be used (Where?)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1) Psycho-pedagogical dynamics in the teacher-pupil relationship *Educational psychology* | *Books on general subjects (1, 2, 3)* | **Catalogues**  
**Online bookstores**  
**Databases**  
**E-book and e-journals portals** |
| 2) Primary school children: cognitive and emotional needs *Development psychology* | | |
| 3) Foreign pupils: cognitive and emotional needs *Intercultural pedagogy* | *Articles on specific subjects (1, 3, 4)* | **Databases**  
**E-book and e-journals portals** |
| 4) Teachers-foreign pupils: good practices *Educational research. Experiences* | *Grey literature for very specific subjects (4)* | **Databases**  
**Open Archives**  
**Search engines** |
# Example search

## Issues in pedagogy [5]

## Search criteria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tools to be used (Where?)</th>
<th>Search criteria (How?)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Library catalogues**     | **Keywords:** few and not too specific because the search will apply mainly to the title of the book  
**CDD number** for OPAC Bicocca, SBN, BL  
**Subject headings** for SBN, BL, LOC |
| **Online bookstores**      | **Keywords:** few and not too specific because the search will apply only to the title of the book |
| Libreria universitaria, Amazon etc. | |
| **Databases**              | **Keywords:** few and specific because the search will apply also to the abstract*  
**Thesaurus descriptors** (terms checked by every databases) |
| Ital: BIBL, RIVI, GOLD; Minori  
Eng: ERIC*, ERC*; MetaBib  
* searches within full text for BD eng | |
| **E-book and e-journal portals** | **Keywords:** many and specific because the search will also apply to the full text |
| Torrossa; JSTOR, Project MUSE | |
| **Open Archives**          | **Keywords:** few and specific because the search will apply also to the abstract |
| BOA, Pleiadi; SSRN | |
| **Search engines**         | **Keywords:** many and specific because the search will also apply to the full text |
| Google Scholar | |
Torrossa and IL

Searching [1]

Carrying out a quick search in Torrossa Store

![Screenshot of Torrossa Store search results]

**Search Query:** RELAZIONE AND INSEGNANTE AND BAMBINI

**Results:**
- 2919 results ordered by relevance
- Display: 20 results per page

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**Details:**
- **Title:** I gesti iconici dell’insegnante: effetti del viewpoint sulla memoria degli alunni
- **Author:** Maria Giorgio
- **Publication:** Firenze, Firenze University Press, 2005
- **Type:** Book (982)
- **Language:** Italian (797)
- **Coverage:** 1971 (21)

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**Notes:**
- The search results cover a wide range of subjects related to teaching and learning.
Torrossa and IL

Searching [2]

Filtering results by classification
Torrossa and IL

Searching [3]

Finding documents on very specific subjects
Torrossa and IL

Searching [4]

Analyzing content and widening the search
Torrossa and IL
Searching [5]

Saving search results and using the Web 2.0 functions
Torrossa and IL

Searching [6]

Using the advanced search and viewing documents
Torrossa and IL
Searching [7]

Exploring international literature by discipline area
Torrossa and IL
Searching [8]

Downloading full text content from Torrossa-Unimib
Torrossa and IL

**SWOT analysis**

**Strengths**
- Many European e-books/e-journals
- Much Social Sciences content
- Books and journal classification
- Web 2.0 user functions

**Weaknesses**
- Advanced search could be improved
- Some functions are not very intuitive

**Opportunities**
- Increase content thanks to publishers and libraries
- Promotion of the search resource through IL activities

**Threats**
- Budget restrictions for universities
- Under use for research among students and researchers
- Lack of promotion and training
Conclusions

A university library can...

- Promote search resources
- Enrich digital collections (e-books, e-journals)
- Increase training for users and e-learning options
Thank you for your attention!

Comments?

Questions?
Contact details

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