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Conversation and Change: Integrating Information Literacy to Support Learning in the New Zealand Tertiary Context.

A thesis presented for partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy
at Massey University, Manawatu

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2013

ABSTRACT

This thesis outlines a participatory action research (PAR) PhD project aimed at embedding information literacy development into a four-year Bachelor of Environmental Planning (BEP) at a New Zealand university. The research suggests enhancing information literacy is an effective strategy to support students' development of essential academic competencies over the full undergraduate programme. The research took an 'informed learning' (Bruce, 2008a) approach (using information to learn), shifting the focus of information literacy development from the library into the academic classroom. PAR allowed a dual focus on both action (to support staff to change pedagogy) and research (to understand the process of change).

The key purpose of this research was to support BEP instructors to identify ways they could embed IL development into their curriculum and assessment to support students' learning during the transition into and through tertiary study. This involved reconceptualising students' apparent lack of effective research and writing skills as a developmental concern. Prior to this research, existing information literacy support in the Bachelor of Environmental Planning had an information search and retrieval focus. Furthermore, product-focused assessment did not explicitly engage students in key aspects of the research and writing process.

Therefore, this research took a learner-focused, process-oriented view of learning, and developed a thread of reflective learning throughout the programme. To support quality source selection and use, library workshops were refocused and new formative assessments were created requiring students to justify source selection and reflect on learning. While the interventions proved successful in supporting learning, the research revealed that more in-depth conversation with academics, librarians and students on how information impacts on learning is needed to encourage students to make considered information choices and become informed learners.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This research was a truly collaborative process, professionally and personally. There are several people I would like to personally thank:

Firstly, I would like to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisors, Associate Professor Lisa Emerson and Dr. Gillian Skyrme. Throughout this process, you have been dedicated, supportive, and encouraging. You delivered constructive criticisms gently, and boosted me when my confidence was failing. Your guidance and suggestions have helped me learn so much and have made this challenging journey seem possible from start to finish.

Secondly, my gratitude extends to AKO Aotearoa, my scholarship providers. I have truly appreciated both the financial and professional support provided through a collegial research community for emerging and experienced researchers alike. I am incredibly grateful they invested in my PhD research.

Thirdly, this journey has been a collaborative learning experience, made possible by the commitment of the five participating BEP instructors I am eternally grateful that you volunteered to engage in this research. Your dedication and commitment to improving student learning was sustained over the two years of the project and beyond. Your stories are captured within these pages, your friendships valued, and your contribution to my learning immeasurable.

A huge thanks also goes out to the BEP students, who volunteered to be a part of this process and gave honest, reflective feedback. The whole point of this research was to help you learn, and I truly believe you have.

Finally, my sincere thanks goes to the university librarians who actively engaged in developing and delivering the re-focused library workshops, and engaged in on-going conversation with me around IL. Your professionalism and dedication to student learning is admirable, and your efforts in this research are truly appreciated. Thanks also to librarians at other universities for discussing your experiences, successes and challenges with me.

On a personal note, my eternal gratitude goes to my family and friends who supported me throughout this research. I couldn't have done this without you, and your love and support made this research journey possible.

Thank you to my friends, old and new, who have come through this journey with me, and put up with me going on about this project for nearly four years! Particular thanks goes to Lara, Tash, Maryanne, Katy and my cousin Karene, who all took a real interest in what I was doing and supported me through the stress, encouraged me, discussed ideas with me and helped me find all the typos!

To both Nana and Nana Pete, thanks for encouraging me and always being proud of my achievements.

Kay, the best mother-in-law I have. Thank you for always being there, for taking care of the boys, helping out at home, and maintaining a genuine interest in what I have been doing. I could not have done this without you.

Mum, I finally finished! You have made me who I am. I inherited your strength and determination, and I have needed both to get through this. You have always believed I could do it, even when I doubted myself, and you were right, as always.

My sister, B. I think I have said frequently 'I can only do what I do, because you do what you do'. You have been there every step of this journey to support me, encourage me, and listen while I babbled on. Thank you for being the best sister and best Aunty ever!

My darling boys, Blake and Jared. Thank you for being so good while Mum was working hard writing her book. I needed all your hugs. I love you to the moon and back.

Finally, my husband, Scott. Your unconditional love and support makes me stronger. We survived this together, for better and worse.

I love you all.

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Abbreviations

ACRL	Association of College and Research Libraries
ALA	American Library Association
ANCIL	A New Curriculum for Information Literacy
ANZIL	Australia New Zealand Information Literacy (Framework)
AR	Action research
BI	Bibliographic instruction
COL	Course outline
CHO	Course hand-out
CWS	Course website
IIN	Interviews with all BEP instructors
IL	Information literacy
IMN	Instructor meeting notes
IRF	Instructor's reflective feedback
NZ	New Zealand
NZPI	New Zealand Planning Institute
PAR	Participatory action research
RSQ	Research sub-question
SFG	Student focus group
SJN	Student reflective journal
SSV	Student survey
UK	United Kingdom
US	United States of America