Bridging Skills and Thresholds: Exploring Instructors’ Definitions of Information Literacy Using Bloom’s Revised Taxonomy
• Shifting IL definitions:
  o Universal & transferrable skills & abilities
  o Articulation of thinking, knowing, acting, creating, & communicating valued in academe

• Faculty value IL but:
  • Do not incorporate IL into their teaching practice
  • Do not believe that learners are developing their IL

• We need to build a bridge between these conceptions of information literacy that can be practically applied to our various teaching and instructional support activities
Purpose

Explore instructors’ perceptions of information literacy using Bloom’s Revised Taxonomy to develop a working model of an information literacy taxonomy that accounts for both foundational information literacy skills and ways of thinking and knowing.
Faculty Perceptions of Information Literacy

- Disciplinary faculty believe that information literacy encompasses a range of skills and practices that are essential for success in college and beyond (Bury, 2016; Dacosta, 2010; Dubicki, 2013; Gullikson, 2006; Guth et al., 2018; Pinto, 2016, Saunders, 2012)

- Inconsistency in information literacy-related teaching activity from disciplinary faculty (Dacosta, 2010; Dubicki, 2013; McGuiness, 2006; Saunders, 2012)
Disciplinary faculty perceive that learners develop their information literacy progressively throughout their collegiate career (Cope & Sanabria, 2014; Dawes, 2019a; McGowan et al., 2016)

Disciplinary faculty do not believe that learners are mastering the higher-order thinking skills associated with information literacy (Bury, 2011; Cope & Sanabria, 2014; Dawes, 2019b)
Novice-Expert Gap

- It can be difficult for faculty to remember how they developed these skills (McGuinness, 2006).

- “Experts often don’t consciously know what they know or think about it explicitly enough to explain it to someone else” (Adler-Kassner and Wardle, 2022, p. 3).

- Faculty may design assignments that they believe to be basic and appropriate for a novice, but are actually quite complex and difficult (Leckie, 1996).
Bloom’s Taxonomy

- A common tool that educators use to scaffold learning and articulate expectations for learning (i.e. learning goals, objectives, and outcomes)

- Typically a six-tiered triangle, in which...
  - foundational skills are at the base of the triangle, and...
  - higher-order thinking skills represented at the peak. (Anderson & Krathwohl, 2001)
METHODS
Methods

- Part of a research study and program evaluation of an information literacy-related teaching professional development workshop at The Ohio State University.

- Pre-workshop survey question – “What does the term information literacy mean to you, if anything?” (n=51)
## Bloom’s Revised Taxonomy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Remember</td>
<td>Recall facts and basic concepts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand</td>
<td>Explain ideas or concepts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply</td>
<td>Use information in situations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyze</td>
<td>Draw connections among ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluate</td>
<td>Justify a stand or decision</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create</td>
<td>Produce new or original work</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Reproduction of Vanderbilt University’s Center for Teaching’s Bloom’s Taxonomy (https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/blooms-taxonomy/)
Information Literacy Taxonomy
FINDINGS
## Information Literacy Taxonomy

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Frequency (n=51)</th>
<th>Frequency Ranking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Remember</td>
<td>Awareness</td>
<td>12 (20%)</td>
<td>#4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Understand</td>
<td>Basic skills</td>
<td>17 (33%)</td>
<td>#2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply</td>
<td>Skill competence</td>
<td>16 (31%)</td>
<td>#3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analyze</td>
<td>Contextual application and meaning making</td>
<td>20 (39%)</td>
<td>#1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Create</td>
<td>Creating and presenting information</td>
<td>6 (12%)</td>
<td>#5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Remember
(n=12, 20%, #4)

- A general awareness, understanding, or knowledge of skills, dispositions, and/or knowledge practices related to information literacy.
  - “knowledge of databases”
  - “aware of how to check sources”
  - “understanding the need to confront contradictions and multiple voices”

- Foundational for more complex ways of thinking and acting
  - “The first facet is that the student should be familiar with the key concepts and theories of the discipline and how they are applied.”
Understand (n=17, 33%, #2)

- Basic, applied skills related to information literacy
  - “ability to access, understand, use, and evaluate information”
  - “ability to find and use credible sources”
  - “skeptical before accepting information as fact”

- Learners are beginning to develop the capacity for these skills, practices, and ways of thinking, but they have not yet reached mastery of them.
Apply
(n=16, 31%, #3)

- Moving towards mastery of basic skills, including critical thinking, related to information literacy
  - “skills needed to effectively navigate online databases for research”
  - “to find, identify, read, understand, and use them appropriately”
  - “the ability to find, assess, and use information critically”

- Beginning of a shift from basic skills to more sophisticated and active ways of thinking about and interacting with information.
Analyze
(n=20, 39%, #1)

- Connecting and adapting skills to particular information contexts and meaning-making activities and seeing the bigger picture
  - “being able to understand limitations and strengths of different sources of information”
  - “identify when more information is needed and identify the ways in which to use that information”
  - “read and make sense of research in their discipline”

- Moving from a skill- or task-based orientation to the integration of critical thinking skills relevant to the information context
  - Critically engaging with information and sources...not just consuming them
Create (n=6, 12%, #5)

- Sharing or creating new information or knowledge with specific audiences
  - “using available information sources to develop a research question, put together a search strategy, find appropriate sources, and present research to an audience.”
  - “understand the interplay between the elements of rhetorical situation (audience, creator, purpose, topic, climate, culture, kairos).”

- Transitioning from information consumer to knowledge creator
Implications for Practice

• Provides a structure for intentional reflection on information literacy-related learning goals...

In the classroom
• Interrogating assumptions of learners’ prior knowledge
• Identifying how to provide learners with practice to more fully develop skills or habits or mind

At the curricular level
• Ensuring an appropriate, scaffolded pathway for learners to develop complex understandings and applications of information literacy
This paper will be published in the June 2024 issue of the *Journal of Information Literacy.*
Thank you!

Our slides can be found at:
https://go.osu.edu/ecillLtaxonomy

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References


- Bury, S. (2011). Faculty attitudes, perceptions and experiences of information literacy: A study across multiple disciplines at York University, Canada. *Journal of Information Literacy, 5*(1), 45-64. [https://doi.org/10.1108/00220410710737187](https://doi.org/10.1108/00220410710737187)


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• Dubicki, E. (2013). Faculty perceptions of students’ information literacy skills competencies. *Journal of Information Literacy, 7*(2), 97-125. https://doi.org/10.11645/7.2.1852


References

