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Fall, Ellen

2013

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Total number of authors:
1

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Ellen Fall

Social Sciences Faculty Library

Lund University

Introduction

In this project paper written for the course *Learning and Teaching in Higher Education* I will explore a possible way to educate faculty about using e-books. The seminar outlined in this project evolves mainly around technical issues and practical usage. I will not be *promoting* e-books. I'm not trying to discourage anybody from using printed materials, but rather offering help that might be needed by someone who is unsure of what e-books are and how they can be used.

I also want to state clearly that I don't want to give the impression that e-books are somehow more important, modern or interesting that printed books. The often perceived dichotomy between the two publication formats is not beneficial to anybody. Most studies cited in this paper emphasize that there needn't be an "either or"-relationship between the two book formats.

The libraries at Lund University supply e-books from about 40 different publishers and providers. In April 2013 we have access to approximately 220 000 e-book titles. This is a large collection and faculty need to know how to use it.

What users think and what users do

Numerous studies have been conducted, usually by libraries, to find out what users think of e-books in a learning environment.

Jeff Staiger (2012) has published an overview over "some two dozen" studies of e-book issues in higher education conducted between 2006 and 2011, in which he outlines main findings. Barbara Blummer and Jeffrey Kenton (2012) have also tracked literature concerning libraries' best practices in working with e-books. The outcomes show that very few people prefer e-books to printed books at all times. Rather, most users in the studies prefer print books at most times. No study that Staiger (2012) reviewed advocated one choice to be superior to the other (p. 360). Blummer and Kenton (2012) also cite studies that show that most users prefer print, but recognize the advantages of e-books.

Some explanations for the rise of e-book usage in spite of print preferences can be that the e-book was the only format available or that the e-book provides better search opportunities (Blummer and Kenton 2012 p. 66). Edward W. Walton (2008) has investigated the discrepancy that comes from users indicating that they prefer print, yet often use e-books. He uses the terms *forced adoption* versus *adaptation*. If the users have only one choice of format they are forced to *adopt* it. Walton also argues that students have *adapted* the e-book's original purpose – to be read in full – and are now using them primarily for browsing (like they already do with electronic journal articles), thus making the e-version more desirable (pp. 26-30).

E-books and print books are in many studies perceived to be read in different ways. E-books are read extensively; scholars on all levels use them to extract certain pieces of information whereas print is read more in detail (Staiger 2012; Walton 2008; Wong et. al. 2011). Staiger (2012) adopts the term "use rather than read" for the phenomenon (p. 355). In every single

study he includes in his review respondents preferred print books for immersive, extended reading and leisure reading (pp. 361-362).

The fact that e-books seem to be read in less detail is sometimes used as an argument against using them at all – the misgiving being that students won't actually learn, only browse. Staiger (2012) discusses this issue (and indeed the more philosophical aspects of what constitutes a book) at length. One of his points is that perhaps students try to use all books in this manner – the e-book simply makes it more visible (pp. 361-362). I strongly agree with the opinion that reading is an important tool for learning and that teachers must help students learn how to read different texts in an effective way, regardless of format (McKeachie and Svinicki 2011, p 34).

Libraries promoting e-books and supporting users

Being information literate is important for all scholars. The ability to access and use all kinds of scientific materials is vital. Hence e-book knowledge is significant for faculty at any university. Another point is that some books are no longer purchased or even published in print, or can be very hard to come by (Quan-Haase and Martin 2011).

Anabel Quan-Haase and Kim Martin (2011) have interviewed six history professors and present some interesting findings. Researchers normally rely on the library to meet their information needs and librarians are seen as gate keepers for the flow of information. This gives librarians a position as change agents who might facilitate the e-book adoption process. The researcher often turns directly to the librarian with questions relating to e-books, but also asks friends, colleagues and students for help and suggestions. Quan-Haase and Martin (2011) point to the benefits of a reciprocal relationship where librarians share their knowledge of e-books and the teachers share their needs, in order for librarians to buy the right books and present them in an ideal way. In the interviews professors suggested that the library could arrange workshops on the subject.

One problem for the libraries is that users often aren't aware of the library e-books' existence. The library catalogue is one possible promotional tool (Blummer and Kenton 2012 p. 87). Staiger (2012) argues that it's not enough to include e-books in the library catalogue – they must also be actively promoted by librarians. Many users may be confused as to what constitutes an e-book, which of course also calls for clarification by librarians (Staiger 2012 p.357; Quan-Haase and Martin 2011). Librarians must also be aware that many faculty members might rely on Google to find e-books (Quan-Haase and Martin 2011), and aren't aware of differences between different kinds of e-books. A number of studies agree that more promotion and instruction from the library to students and/or faculty is needed to get the most out of e-books (Staiger 2012 pp. 360-361).

Teachers, students and e-books

Should teachers try to implement e-books into their classes? No single tool used in education can be used in all settings. McKeachie and Svinicki (2011 pp. 235-237, p. 264) say that technological tools may well improve teaching and learning even "promote greater student academic achievement" (p.264), but an important point is that these techniques shouldn't be used for their own sake. The teacher needs to carefully plan the implementation. Wong et. al. (2011) advocate combining e-books with multimedia tools, thus creating a more diverse learning experience. E-books are said to have the potential of being powerful teaching tools if there isn't too much hassle with technology (p. 1350).

Teachers act as powerful role models to students, who often are eager to act like their professors. (McKeachie and Svinicki 2011, p. 57) In accordance with this, Mark Nelson (2008) argues that there is no single factor as important for student e-book acceptance as that of their professors adopting the technology. He even states that students who might prefer the digital version of a book might use the printed one instead, if they perceive that the professor favors it. In a literature review Blummer and Kenton (2012) refer to numerous sources that point out ways in which the faculty is vital to e-book adoption (pp. 88-89). The reviewed studies point to the importance of the library marketing e-books to faculty, who then in turn can influence student behavior. There seems to be a close relationship between promotion/instruction and use (pp. 89-91). If teachers can get help discovering digital materials and some empirical evidence that e-books can improve student learning, their attitudes might change (Nelson 2008).

Interestingly, students also seem to influence teachers' attitudes towards e-books. Quan-Haase and Martin (2011) discovered that the professors they interviewed often expected students to be positive, simply because they were considered young and technology savvy. In my experience, the notion that the students are already way ahead of the faculty technology-wise is not really true, but it's important that teachers have the opportunity to learn technological skills they need not to feel surpassed by students.

Hence the purpose of educating faculty about e-book usage is threefold: they need to know how to use e-books for meeting their own information needs, e-books can be used as a pedagogical tool in their teaching and they have the opportunity to influence students in a positive direction.

Outlines for an e-book workshop

The Social Sciences Faculty Library has held seminars aimed at faculty before, and also regularly invites researchers and teachers to workshops on for instance reference management. An e-book workshop would fit well into that tradition. Initially, an e-mail invitation would be sent to all faculty, and ideally include some sort of "success story" or at least a "what's in it for me?" explanation to motivate people to attend.

A group of ten to fifteen people should work, but no more than that if they are to be able to ask questions and get help. Two hours are needed, as to include both a short lecture, hands-on

experimenting and a summary. It could be held by me alone, but would be more rewarding if at least one more librarian shared the teaching and the hands-on instruction. Faculty members usually appreciate having actually met the librarian they later need to ask questions (Quan-Haase and Martin 2011) and to have more than one person teaching could be beneficial in that aspect as well.

The session aims to help a participant:

- recognize the most common types of e-books on the market and their features,
- be familiar with the software/apps needed to download e-books,
- know how to find out what terms apply to specific Lund University e-books.

These goals will be explained to the participants at the beginning. These are very experienced learners who themselves teach, and they are very likely to know the importance of meaningful goals for enhancing learning outcomes (Weinstein et. al. 2011). The goals are very concrete, and the purpose is that each participant will get the skills that they feel are the most needed for them. The outcome is expected to be entirely "quantitative" knowledge, i. e. useful in everyday work.

The entire session will be centered on the Lund University Libraries' e-book subject guide: http://libguides.lub.lu.se/ebooks. This guide contains all the information needed to work towards the goals (and more).

At the beginning of the session the participants will receive a printed paper with explanations of approximately five to ten relevant key concepts that one needs to understand to keep up with the session. It will facilitate the learning if the participants needn't memorize (or possibly forget right away) the meaning of the recurrent technical terms. Since these concepts may well be foreign to many participants it's better they get to focus on what's being explained, and not on how to write it down. McKeachie and Svinicki (2011) conclude their section on note taking with a recommendation of supplying notes to students: "That format seems to […] be most consistent with learning and motivation research" (p. 70).

As this paper is passed out, it would be good to mention the fact that print of course has many advantages and that many people (most, even) prefer print in many cases (Staiger 2012 and others). In my experience some users might feel that preferring print is frowned upon or at least outdated.

I intend to use a power point presentation to explain these key concepts, for instance giving examples of different kinds of e-books and how they are handled by libraries or what Digital Right Management (DRM) rules are and how they apply to different books. I expect this lecture to last about 20-30 minutes – in that is included plenty of question-time.

After the initial lecture the participants will be presented with a list with four or five references to e-books available at Lund University. Their assignment is to find the book through one of our search systems, identify what kind it is and if possible download it to a computer or handheld device.

Using many different examples is a technique that gives the learner a chance to identify the essential feature of each e-book and compare them to each other. According to McKeachie and Svinicki examples that relate to the students' experience and knowledge are the most effective (2011 p. 62). All references will be to e-books in the social sciences subject area, ideally including some that are used as textbooks on several courses.

I have used this approach on many of my regular information literacy teaching sessions and I find it very effective. Comparing and contrasting different titles helps the students understand the basic principles and how they apply. They get to try the search systems first hand, and by doing something active/experimenting they are more likely to remember the content of the session. Thus by letting students work independently I seek to engage them in *experiential learning*, defined by David A. Kolb as: "Learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience" (Kolb 1984 p. 36). Kolb's definition focuses on the learning process rather than outcomes (which is beneficial for these participants, who are supposed to later use their skills in their everyday work) and indicates that knowledge is constantly created and recreated in a transformation process. It emphasizes the importance of experience, and also takes perception, cognition and behavior into account (Kolb 1984).
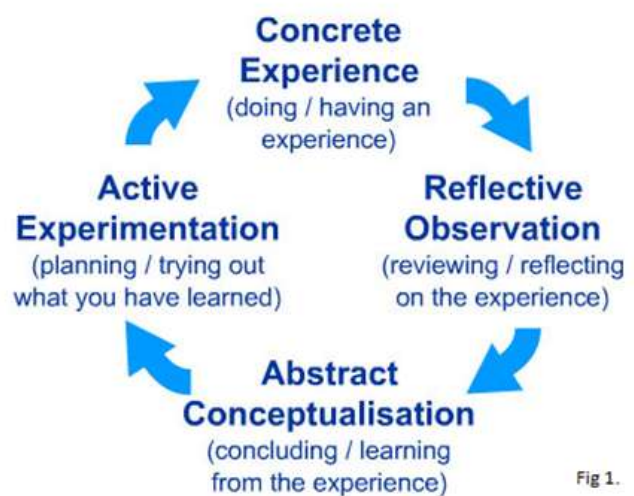

Fig 1.

The concept of providing references for the students to find is effective in taking them through the different *learning stages* (Fig. 1, McLeod 2010a). They engage in "active experimentation", get "concrete experiences" and hopefully reflect upon and learn from them. Passing through these stages in *Kolb's Experiential Learning Cycle* should benefit effective learning and also help with remembering how to use e-books. It is important to pass through all stages, and thus vital to encourage reflection and analyzing during the workshop (McLeod 2010b).

After the exercise (and a coffee break) we'll go over the results. No doubt the participants will have run into problems or thought of new questions to ask. Since the e-books they've looked for have been chosen to represent a number of suppliers I also get opportunities to go through the steps of finding, identifying and downloading the e-books on the big screen while discussing how each case could be handled.

At the end I also intend to inform the participants about how they can request e-book acquisitions from the library, and how to find out if a particular book is published in e-format. This is particularly important for teachers choosing literature for their students to read. If two titles are pretty much equal in content, perhaps the one also available as an e-book is preferred?

At the end of the session I plan to hand out a minute paper/evaluation with the two questions "What was the most important thing you learned during this class?" and "What important questions remain unanswered?". This classroom assessment technique (Angelo and Cross 1993) serves both as a method to allow the participant to think the session through once more, and as a way for me to evaluate and possibly improve the contents and pedagogy before I hold another session. The result of the minute papers will be compiled and e-mailed to the participants some days later, accompanied by answers to possible questions.

I believe this workshop will serve the members of the Social Sciences Faculty well as an introduction for using e-books.

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