Training the future librarian: Shifts and challenges in the past that could direct the way forward

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Outline

• Introduction
• Major shifts
• Impact on user behaviour
• Challenges to user assistance
• Implications for training of librarians
• Future prospects
Aftermath of WWII (1959-1979)

- Information explosion
- Need for control
- Print based sources
- User studies
- Personal assistance to user
- Training of librarians
User studies (1980 -1990)

• User groups emerged
• Collection development practices
• Personal assistance to users
• Training of librarians:
  – Bibliographic control
  – Access & retrieval of information
  – Educating library users
Advances in ICTs (1990-2000)

- Electronic information
- New types of sources and services
- New access tools & techniques
- New user groups emerged
- Personal assistance changed
  
  (Bibliographic instruction replaced by computer instruction)

- Training of librarians:
  - Sophisticated search techniques
  - Effective information seeking
  - High relevance v low recall
Internet (2000-2005)

- Proliferation of sources & resources
- Information access improved
- Remote users
- Personal assistance
- Training of librarians
  - Internet searching, search engines, functions,
  - Internet information sources & services, organisation of information on the internet
  - Skilling in ICT tools, menu-driven searching, hyper links, command languages
  - Refining of searches, surfing between hyperlinks evaluating research results
Information literacy training

IL enables user to access, evaluate, synthesize communicate & ethically use information

- Bibliographic instruction to computer instruction
- Personal assistance that of instructor
- IL training - primarily tool based skills
- Librarians were trained to assist the end user in end-user searching.
Web 2.0 (2005 - )

- Google wave
- Virtual environment
- Proliferation of web–based services
- Diverse user groups – Google generation
- Social networking
- Personal assistance
- Training of librarians
Profile of new users

- Competent with technology
- High expectations of ICTs
- Prefer interactive systems
- Shifted to digital forms of communication
- Used to being entertained
- Prefer visual information over text
- View peers as more credible than authoritative texts
- Connected to the web
- Cut & Paste generation
# Web 2.0 & IL 2.0

**Web 2.0**
- New complex social relationships
- End users creators and co-creators of text *(collaborative knowledge production)*
- Blurring authority
- Modification & duplication of texts

**IL 2.0**
- Build on existing structures
- Use variety of resources *(oral, digital, print)*
- Involves more than mastering of generic skills
- Includes socio–technical & communication aspects
- Determining authority, authenticity, accuracy
Trends in training

- Print environment
- Electronic environment
- Web 2.0
- User education
- Information literacy
- Information literacy 2.0
Future prospects

- IL training – not exclusive LIS domain – partnership with education
- Former practices remain important
- New practices become ‘add ons’
- User becomes independent seeker
- Digital literacy will become prerequisite
- No guarantee that current trend will continue
- Information behaviour will remain key factor