

# Information Literacy (IL) Skills of Students at Paris Descartes University

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**Entrez dans la réalité !**

113 IUT dans toute la France  
proposent 685 DUT et  
plus de 1400 Licences Professionnelles

# The University Institute of Technology (UIT) in France

- ▶ Founded in 1966 => 113
- ▶ They graduate students after two years of studies to become professional according to a national curricula
- ▶ Since 2000, UIT delivers bachelor degrees to students who achieved two years of studies in other universities
- ▶ PS : this group is representative of the French undergraduate students



# The UIT at Paris Descartes University

- Founded in 1968
- Six departments
  - Social Careers (CS)
  - Business and Administration Management (GEA)
  - Information and Communication (IC)
  - Computing Science (INFO)
  - Statistics and Data Processing (STID)
  - Marketing Techniques (TC)
- Different diplomas

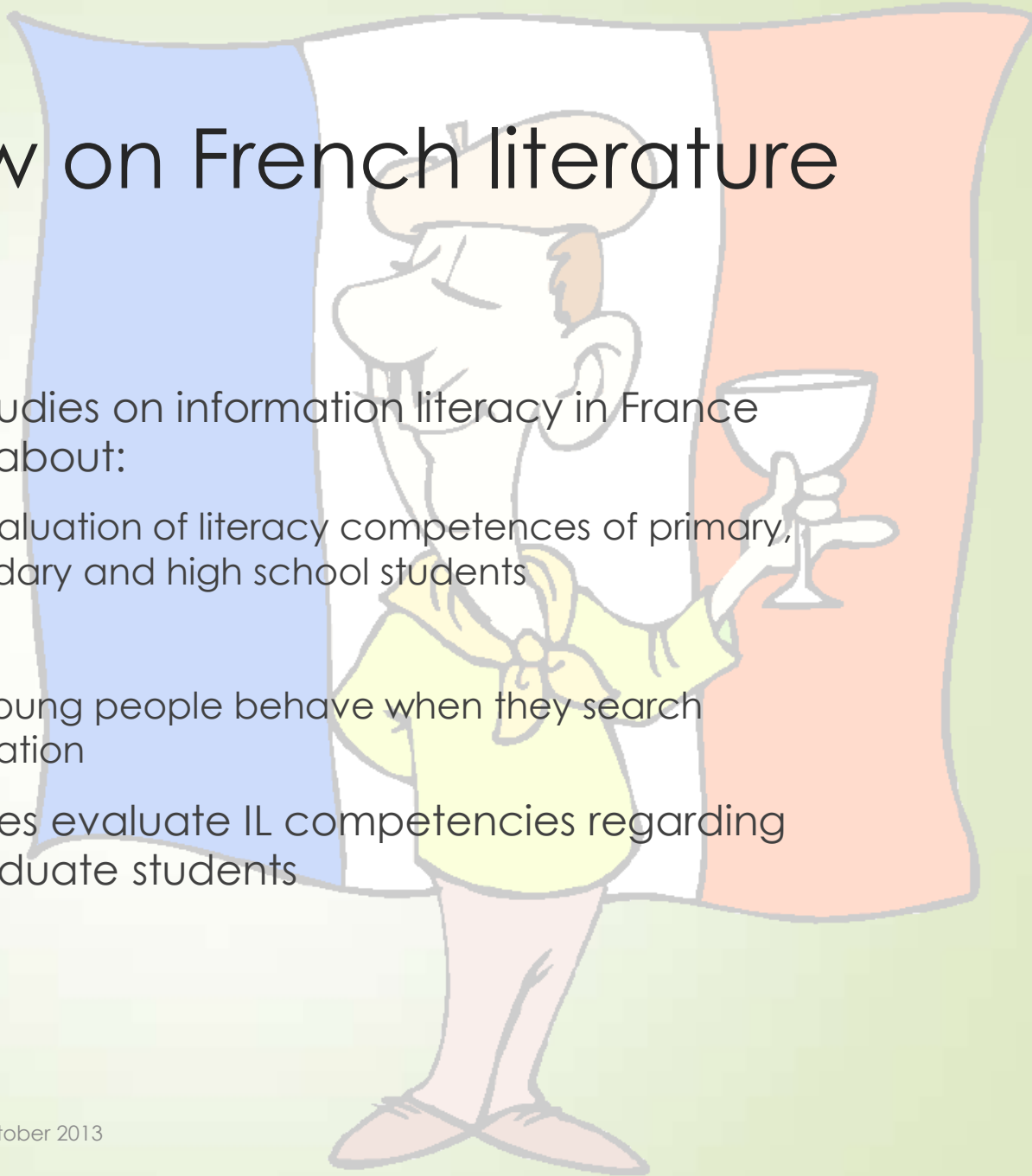


# The aim of this research

- To know if the students of the University Institute of Technology at Paris Descartes have the basis of Information Literacy skills
- To understand how the students carry out their research work
- To find if there are any weaknesses
- To see if there is a meaningful difference in IL skills among disciplines

# Review on French literature

- ▶ A lot of studies on information literacy in France concern about:
  - ▶ the evaluation of literacy competences of primary, secondary and high school students
  - or
  - ▶ how young people behave when they search information
- ▶ Few studies evaluate IL competencies regarding undergraduate students





# Methodology

- Data was collected during the first semester and the beginning of the second semester (2012-2013)
- Online survey was completed by students
- It is a self-assessment checklist about IL skills using a Likert scale
  - from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”
  - from “never” to “almost always”
- The survey was conducted in the classroom for the majority of respondents
- Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the findings
- Chi-square tests of independence were used to compare the factors such as disciplines and IL competencies

# Students distribution

- 16.27% of total number of students at the UIT

N of stud. by dep.		CS	GEA	IC	INFO	STID	TC	Total	% resp.
		249	595	306	397	212	546	<b>2305</b>	
Year of study	First year	8	21	95	32	18	3	177	47.2
	Second year	7	16	30	43	17	1	114	30.4
	Third year	2	8	30	21	1	22	84	22.4
	Total	17	45	155	96	36	26	<b>375</b>	



# Participants profile

## ➤ Age

- 62.4% between 18-20
- 28.8% between 21-23
- Less than 10% over 25

## ➤ Gender

- 54.7% of the respondents were female
- Predominance of girls (80%) in the Information and Communication Department
- Predominance of boys (78.1%) in Computing Science and (61.1%) in Statistics and Data Processing departments
- For the other departments the gender difference was not so significant






# Starting an Assessment

- ▶ 53.3% of students have problem *to begin a course-related research process*
  - ▶ Only 18.9% of them do not have problems
- ▶ 41.9% have difficulty *to define a topic*
  - ▶ Only 27.5% find this task easy
- ▶ 58.9% have difficulty *to narrow a topic*
  - ▶ 18.1% don't have problems
- ▶ PS: a quarter of the students gave a neutral answer
  - ▶ they are unsure about themselves and their competencies



# Different departments, equal competencies?

- ▶ Students from different departments do not face equal challenges
  - ▶ Students from Business and Administration Management department have more difficulties to start an assessment and to define and narrow a topic
  - ▶ Students from Information and communication find those tasks easy except for narrowing the topic
  - ▶ *Narrowing a topic* is also difficult for all students




# Year of studies, better competencies?

- ▶ Having difficulties *to start an assignment* didn't decrease with year of study!!
  - ▶ 49.2% of the first year
  - ▶ 57% in the second and the third year
- ▶ The same observation *with defining a topic*
  - ▶ 38.4% of the first year students
  - ▶ 42.1% in the second year
  - ▶ 48.8% in the third year
- ▶ On the other side, students in the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> years were more comfortable with *narrowing down a topic*
  - ▶ 64.4% for the first year students
  - ▶ 51.8% for the second
  - ▶ 57.1% for the third

# Searching for Information

*Successful information retrieval is essential for successful studies*

- Defining search terms is not difficult for 53.6% of students
  - Only 23.7% consider this step difficult
  - Students do not improve their competencies by passing from first to second or to third year
- Elaborating the search strategy is difficult for 41.1% of students
  - **47.4% => First year**
  - 25.3% => 2nd year
  - 27.3% => 3rd year



# Different departments, better way of searching?

- ▶ Students from different departments do not face equal challenges
  - ▶ For Business and Administration Management students, it is difficult to *come up with the search terms* (46.7%) and to *build a search strategy* (53.3%)
  - ▶ Students from Social Careers are unsure about their competencies (52.9% of them neither agree nor disagree)
    - ▶ Only 29.4% do not have difficulty meeting this objective
- ▶ Students from other departments do not have problems with keywords
- ▶ However, the situation differs with building up the research strategy
  - ▶ Only students from Computing Science do not have difficulty



# Resources from the library

- ▶ 24.8% => no experience with finding articles in library databases
- ▶ 20.3% => don't figure out where to find sources in the library
- ▶ 21.6% => don't know how to find gray literature
- ▶ It is urgent to enhance training to access databases offered by the university library

# Students' Preferred Resources

	Never or Rarely	Sometimes	Often or Almost always
Search engines	.8%	4.5%	94.7%
Course readings	5.1%	15.2%	79.7%
Wikipedia	7.8%	15.0%	77.3%
Personal collection	35.8%	32.4%	31.8%
Video sharing	45.5%	23.8%	30.7%
Online forums	45.2%	26.7%	28.1%
Gov. Web sites	43.9%	28.9%	27.3%
Encyclopedias	49.7%	25.4%	24.9%
Social networking	61.2%	15.0%	23.8%
Blogs	54.5%	26.5%	19.0%
Library shelves	57.0%	24.3%	18.7%
Library catalogs	54.8%	28.6%	16.6%
Gray literature	64.2%	23.5%	12.3%
Slide sharing	74.3%	14.7%	11.0%
Databases (library)	67.4%	22.7%	9.9%

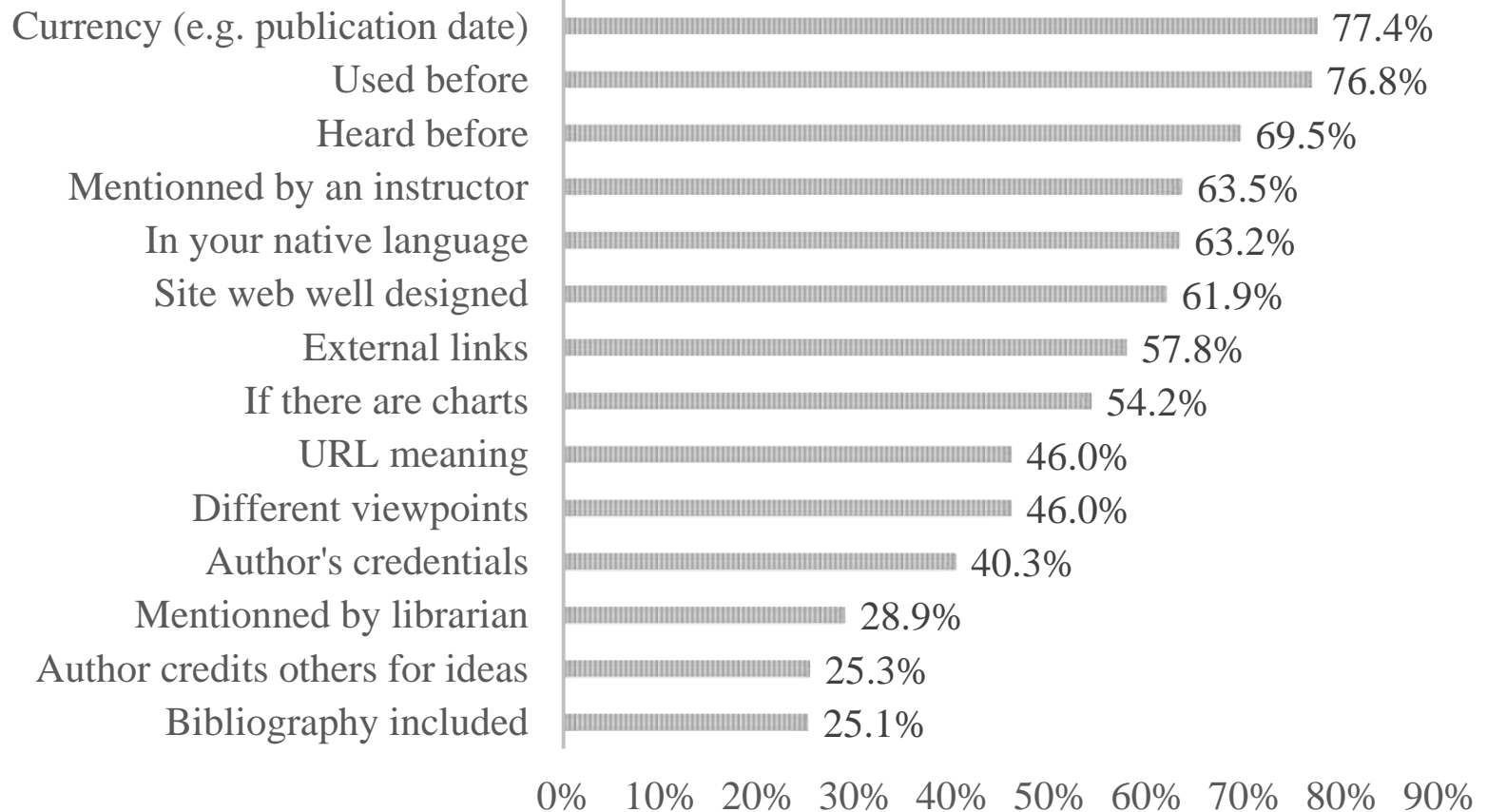
The number of years of study makes no difference in resources used...

# Different departments, different resources?

	Department					
	CS	GEA	IC	INFO	STID	TC
Search engines	<b>82.4%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>98.1%</b>	<b>92.6%</b>	<b>88.9%</b>	<b>88.5%</b>
Course readings	70.6%	<b>82.2%</b>	<b>85.2%</b>	73.7%	<b>83.3%</b>	65.4%
Gov. Web sites	<b>58.8%</b>	<b>53.3%</b>	23.2%	8.4%	22.2%	<b>61.5%</b>
Wikipedia	41.2%	66.7%	<b>84.5%</b>	78.9%	<b>80.6%</b>	65.4%
Video sharing	41.2%	26.7%	33.5%	27.4%	25.0%	34.6%
Library catalogs	<b>41.2%</b>	17.8%	18.1%	9.5%	19.4%	11.5%
Social networking	35.3%	15.6%	29.7%	16.8%	30.6%	11.5%
Personal collection	29.4%	15.6%	<b>45.2%</b>	25.3%	22.2%	19.2%
Library shelves	<b>29.4%</b>	20.0%	<b>29.0%</b>	4.2%	8.3%	15.4%
Encyclopedias	23.5%	26.7%	<b>31.6%</b>	20.0%	11.1%	19.2%
Blogs	23.5%	8.9%	24.5%	20.0%	13.9%	3.8%
Databases (library)	<b>17.6%</b>	15.6%	<b>9.0%</b>	5.3%	16.7%	7.7%
Gray literature	17.6%	22.2%	12.3%	10.5%	2.8%	11.5%
Slide sharing	11.8%	0.0%	12.9%	14.7%	8.3%	7.7%
Online forums	11.8%	8.9%	23.2%	<b>52.6%</b>	30.6%	7.7%



# Validating of Information





# Findings

- The information literacy skills of undergraduate students at Paris Descartes University – UIT are insufficient
- Students are lacking the skills required to effectively and efficiently complete undergraduate course work
- At the beginning of this research, we took into consideration the relation between skills and gender. The results shown that there are no differences among our respondents
- Students are unaware of resources available and offered by the library
- In their behavior, they seem to adopt an easy way out attitude
- They rely heavily on search engines instead of databases
- They prefer Wikipedia to the classical encyclopedia, and they choose the resource they know or have heard about



# Conclusion

- The results of this study demonstrate that the current IL curriculum expectations are insufficient to ensure that students are acquiring the necessary skills
- Information is the lifeblood of academic engagement and successes.
  - **Strong action should be taken to ensure the success of students**
- It is interesting to build curriculum and design pedagogy to increase the relevance of students' learning for the digital contexts in which they live and work
- It is also important to enhanced IL skills at the High School level
  - Students should be prepared for the transition from the high school to university level
  - We should help them to become comfortable and confident when they deal with information



# Perspectives

- ▶ A diagnosis of Information literacy programs and practices at UIT should be a necessary action to adapt the existing programs
- ▶ As a self-assessment, the results may not reflect the participants' true abilities
  - ▶ renewing the survey in order to confirm the findings
  - ▶ a qualitative research will be conducted using a focus group

Thank you for your  
attendance



***Undergraduate students from Paris  
Descartes at Tuz Golu (Salt lake) - Turkey***