

Conceptions, Ideas, What else? Information Literacy in Hungary

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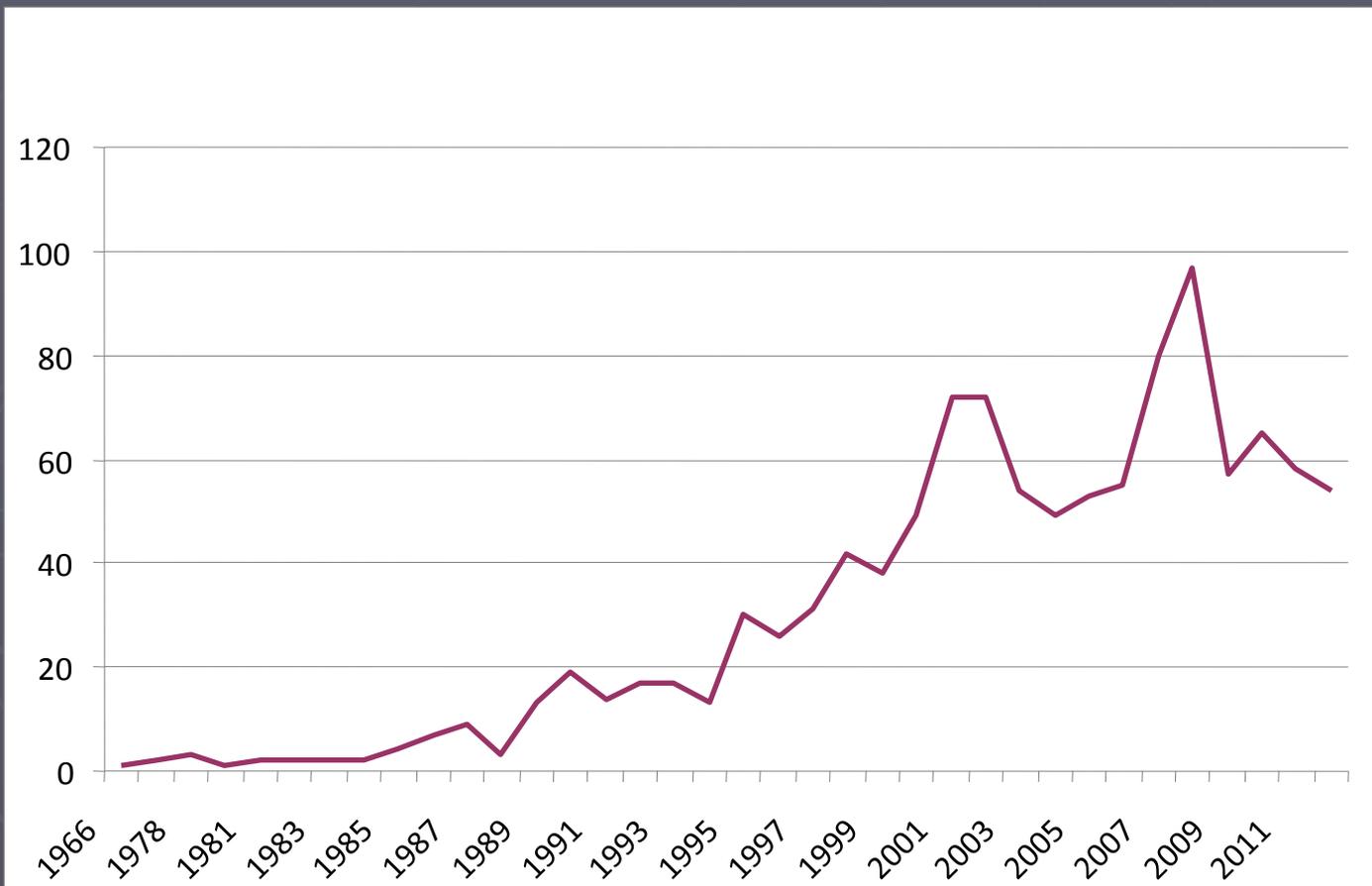
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Hungary is a small country, in the middle of Europe



Publications about information literacy



Terminological difficulties

- ▶ Information literacy is treated as a concept, which is closely related to literacy.
- ▶ An information literate person is regarded as one *having erudition and being educated*.
- ▶ There are also Hungarian writings that follow the German approaches by using the expression *information competency*.
- ▶ There is a lack of differentiation and clarity in using the term *digital literacy*, which is often associated with and restricted to computer literacy.

Information literacy in practice

- ▶ In Hungary 11 higher education institutions are offering BA and MA programs in library and information science.
- ▶ LIS schools in Hungary work with the same core curriculum, which is supplemented by different specializations.
- ▶ Hungarian LIS students are well trained in digital literacy and can attend high quality courses on reference work.

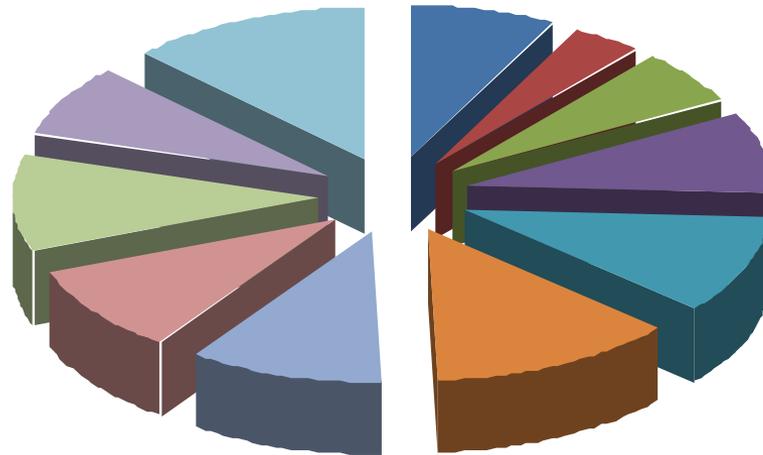
Specialization in information literacy pedagogy (Pécs)

- ▶ This program emphasizes the importance of a critical approach towards information and information resources, and teaches strategies of information retrieval, legal and ethical questions of the use of information.
- ▶ The courses' aim is to develop students' consciousness of information literacy, and to prepare them for teaching the competencies of information literacy in schools and libraries.
- ▶ Many of these students choose a topic for their theses from the field of information literacy.

Information literacy skills of LIS students in Hungary

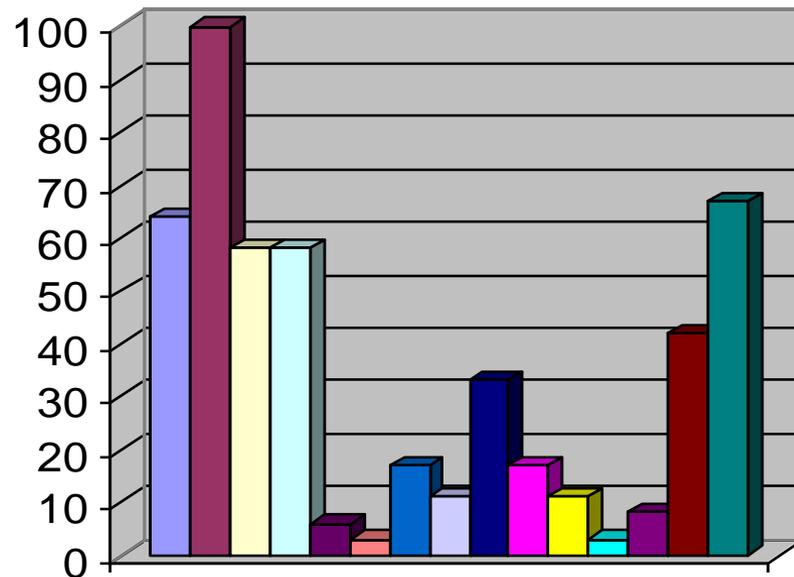
- ▶ International survey - Department of Information and Library Studies at Szent István University (Jászberény).
- ▶ 58.02% of the undergraduate student population was represented.
- ▶ A picture about the strengths and weaknesses of Hungarian LIS students can be drawn.

What is difficult in research?



- Evaluating the sources
- Reading through the material
- Taking notes
- Integrating different sources
- writing
- Re-phrasing
- Knowing when I should cite a source
- Knowing how to cite
- plagiarism or not
- Deciding whether "I'm done" or not
- Knowing whether I've done a good job

The frequency of consulting different resources



How often do you consult these resources for providing information during your course-related assignments?

- Course readings
- Search engines
- Library catalogues
- Encyclopedias
- Governmental Web sites
- Research databases
- Gray literature
- Blogs
- Wikipedia
- Facebook
- You Tube
- Slideshare
- Online forums
- Your personal collection
- Library shelves

Major findings

- ▶ Except for thesis writing, Hungarian students rarely are required to fulfil tasks that would be called research, either qualitative or quantitative.
- ▶ There are no difficulties for them in defining a topic and getting started on an assignment.
- ▶ They have no bigger difficulties in defining a search question and strategy.
- ▶ About 20% of the students said they have problems with identifying relevant hits.
- ▶ It is also hard for them to convert the collected material into new information.

Major findings

- ▶ For information seeking the majority of the students uses internet search engines, mainly Google.
- ▶ Hungarian students rarely consult government sites, and unfortunately they do not like to use research databases in order to solve study assignments.
- ▶ In the selection process freshness and reliability are major issues.
- ▶ One of the most important aspects is that the resource should be in Hungarian.

Major findings

- ▶ The application of modern digital tools in the research process is not common for Hungarian LIS students.
- ▶ They like to apply spell checkers and presentation tools.
- ▶ LIS students mainly use desktop computers and laptops.
- ▶ For communicating with a teacher, mentor or librarian about course-related assignments, the majority of the students uses e-mail and face to face contact.

SWOT analysis of information literacy in Hungary

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strong theoretical background• Strong library background• Good LIS schools• Good research skills• Very good digital literacy skills of the students• A big number of good school library programs• Enthusiastic school librarians	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No institutional background• No political involvement• IL is missing from the curriculum• Students are not good in seeking, selecting and evaluating information• Bad information literacy skills of the teachers
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Interest towards the international literature• Reforms in education• Developing libraries	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Wide digital divide• Budget problems• No public education involvement• No political involvement

Thank you for your attention!

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