Doing Online Relearning through Information Skills (DORIS):
A Mutual Shaping Perspective for Information Literacy Research and Practice

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This PhD study deals with the integration of social media in a learning experience and the roles that information literacy, digital literacy, and new literacies may play in such integration.

Pilot and final empirical studies already took place.

The methodological approach used is participatory action research (PAR) and following this approach the research and methodological framework ‘Doing Online Relearning through Information Skills’ (DORIS) was developed [1].
DORIS as a research framework

Learning interventions: activities, and assignments, structured in 5 stages:

- **1) Introduction:** research structure, main concepts & methods, and mediates a common understanding of the conceptual tools that are going to be used;

- **2) Access:** deals with user practices, information needs, location and selection, accessibility issues. **Assignment 1:** ‘reflect upon your practices as a social media user’.
DORIS as a research framework

3) Use: its topics are, issues of social media, content curation, creation of social media sites, tool integration. Assignment 2: ‘create a social media site’.

4) Evaluation: deals with the use of social media in organizations and the evaluation of social media sites. Assignment 3: ‘evaluate an existing social media site and revisit Assignment 2’ (cognitive dissonance, hence ‘relearning’).

5) Wrap-up: includes final reflections together with the completion of questionnaires and interviews.
Research Questions

- What significant issues, challenges and opportunities emerge when social media are integrated into learning environments in higher education?
  
  - a) How do students’ experience learning when they are engaged in a learning activity that integrates social media?
  
  - b) In what ways are students’ engagement dependent upon their literacies?
  
  - c) In what ways do learning, literacies and social media mutually shape each other?
Data Collection Methods

- a **diagnostic questionnaire** at the beginning of the study,
- a **follow-up questionnaire** and **semi-structured interviews** at the end;
- **other data collection instruments** include:
  - a blog, which was used as a content and interaction hub, thus collecting all learning materials and the forums.
  - **Participants’ forum messages and assignments**
Epistemological Assumptions and Main Theories

- Knowledge is created through socialization [2], [3] it can be discovered [4], as people possess tacit knowledge [5]. Practitioners are capable of generating personal theories by systematically studying their own practice [6].

- The most important concepts used in this study are information literacy [7], [8], [9], digital literacy [10], [11], and new literacies [12], [13], [14].

- The term literacies (plural) is used as container for the three concepts mentioned above.

- The main theories supporting research are: constructivist, blended, and problem based learning; the three dimensions of learning (cognitive, social, and emotional) [15]; and affinity spaces [16].
Why all these literacies are handled separately? Instead of saying ‘multiliteracies’, ‘transliteracies’, and so on...

Engagement is bound to be diverse, consider the following cases:

- Information literate participants may have challenges with technology used.

- So-called ‘digital natives’ may have issues of: focus, following instructions, being critical, seeking or evaluating information (information literacy skills, not digital).

- Both kinds of participants might have different challenges associated with ‘new literacies’.

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Mutual Shaping of Learning, Literacies, and Social Media
A matter of perspective

- Mutual shaping perspective means that learning, literacies, and social media are conceived as elements that mutually shape one another. It is opposed to the idea of ‘technological determinism’.

- It allows to understand how technology might affect social media user practices and how these practices may affect the way technology is implemented into learning contexts.

- Implementing social media might drive the planning and characteristics of a learning experience, but the learning purpose will change the ways technology is being used.
Mutual Shaping of Learning, Literacies, and Social Media

Early data analysis, via content analysis

- This is one of the most important parts of this research: the findings in relation to all research questions will converge on the idea of mutual shaping.

- Participants agreed that these elements mutually shape one another, thus partly confirming one of the main ideas of this research.

- “today everything can be related, through social media you can make a topic of interest known. In fact, in this module we have demonstrated it, in this learning experience we have been demonstrating it”.

- “they are mutually shaped because through one of them you can reach the other ones”. “they are all part of a process”.

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Doing Online Relearning through Information Skills
Conclusions... so far...

- Attempt to empirically determine how exactly this mutual shaping relationship occurs, as there are different 'living dialectics' [18] playing a role. These living dialectics consist of:
  - Usual dialectics between the empirically researched and the related literature;
  - Contraposition of participants' perspectives from both pilot and final study, because of the cyclical nature of PAR [19].
  - Tension between pilot and final studies from the researcher perspective, to achieve a reflection on his own practice. Thus generating a personal and systematic theory [6].
Conclusions... so far...

- Research contributions to information literacy research and practice? Enrich ‘technologically mediated learning’ investigations, information literacy programs, and their pedagogies.

- Powerful theories: three dimensions of learning and affinity spaces.

- Intriguing epistemological assumptions.

- PAR and DORIS provide structure and an example of instructional design.

- During analysis, the exact roles that literacies play in this type of learning experience are expected to emerge.
Many thanks for your attention!!

Questions, comments, suggestions?

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References


References


