Reference in Discovery: Pilot Study and Future Directions

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ABSTRACT

This poster will describe the results of a pilot study focusing on the reference experiences of librarians working in web-scale discovery systems like Ex Libris Primo and Summon, EBSCO Discovery Service (EDS), and WorldCat Discovery. Web-Scale discovery systems rely on a central index and proprietary algorithms to provide a keyword-based search of library content to users that builds on their existing skills using commercial search engines. These systems are ubiquitous in academic libraries but require a shift in reference practice that has not been fully explored in the literature. This pilot study represents a developing dissertation project that will be in the proposal phase at the time of the poster session. The pilot study was based around four semi-structured qualitative interviews with academic librarians. Though the pilot study revealed some interesting insights on the research questions, one of the lessons learned from this study is that the "one voice" of librarian users is not enough to fully explore this issue. The author will discuss changes to the methodology of the project to include the narratives of users and other stakeholders in the data. The poster will also discuss changes to the theoretical foundations of the study that were developed through the data collected in the pilot study, including a greater focus on information literacy instruction in the reference encounter.

ALISE RESEARCH TAXONOMY TOPICS

Reference transactions; Discovery systems; Information literacy; Academic libraries.

AUTHOR KEYWORDS

qualitative research; reference practices; information literacy instruction.