Using Non-English Sources in Academic Research

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BACKGROUND

**AS OF 2019 IN CANADA AND US**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>East Asian Studies Programs</th>
<th>East Asian Studies Scholars</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>362</td>
<td>700</td>
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</table>

**PROBLEM:** Few studies show how East Asian Studies scholars locate non-English sources for their research

**RESEARCH QUESTION**

What information seeking strategies do East Asian Studies scholars use when searching for non-English sources?

**METHODOLOGY**

- **PARTICIPANTS:**
  - Two literature scholars from UBC Dept. of Asian Studies
  - Two librarians (Chinese Studies and Japanese Studies)

- **DATA COLLECTION:**
  - Pre-interview questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, information world mapping

- **DATA ANALYSIS:**
  - Directed content analysis
  - Codes using the information triangle

**IMPLICATIONS**

Greater understanding of the information seeking strategies/behaviours of East Asian studies scholars

**LIMITATIONS**

- Very small sample size affects generalizability
- Scholars from other subject areas were not included

**SCHOLARS’ INFORMATION STRATEGIES**

**INFORMATION STRATEGIES:** *Activities undertaken by a researcher to advance an information-seeking task or meet an information-seeking need* (Sabbar, 2016, pp.53),

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Strategy</th>
<th>Dr. A (Chinese Literature)</th>
<th>Dr. B (Japanese Literature)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FORMAL STRATEGIES</strong> Information retrieval systems</td>
<td>Google UBC Library catalogue Non-UBC Library catalogues/databases</td>
<td>NLU catalogue CNKI/CNMI Books WorldCat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INFORMAL STRATEGIES</strong> Citation tracing and browsing</td>
<td>UBC Asian Library Princeton University Library Berkeley Library The British Library</td>
<td>UBC Asian Library Universities and research institutes in Japan Institutional proceedings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTERACTIVE STRATEGIES</strong> Consultations with colleagues</td>
<td>Scholars (In-person, Mailing lists) Graduate students Librarians Librarians Owners of primary sources</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>HYBRID STRATEGIES</strong> Interlibrary Loan</td>
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**SCHOLARS’ INFORMATION SHIFTS**

**INFORMATION SHIFTS:** *Changes made by users from one information-seeking strategy to another in order to advance the information-seeking process* (Sabbar, 2016, pp.56).

- **PLANNED SHIFT**
  - Research habits
  - Serendipitous discovery

- **OPPORTUNISTIC SHIFT**
  - Searching scholarly databases
  - Consulting other scholars (email, phone, Facebook group)
  - Asking graduate students for help
  - Requesting assistance from a librarian

- **ASSISTIVE/ALTERNATIVE SHIFT**
  - Barriers/Obstacles

- **Hybrid Strategy**
  - Searching Google Scholar/Bibliography
  - Interacting with libraries or archives

**LIBRARIANS’ PERSPECTIVES**

**BOTH CHINESE AND JAPANESE LANGUAGE LIBRARIANS:**

- Language fluency is not an issue for patrons
- Graduate students/faculty need print materials
- Barriers for patrons: Metadata, geography and copyright
- Technological advancements make keyword searches in traditional/simplified Chinese relatively easy for patrons

**JAPANESE LANGUAGE LIBRARIAN:**

- Barriers for patrons: Constructing, Japanese language queries
- Role of the librarian: Intermediary with libraries in Japan
- Few e-book resources available due to print book culture

**FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS**

Recruit graduate students, early-career faculty members, and East Asian scholars from other subject areas

**CONCLUSION**

- Study participants used formal, informal, interactive, and hybrid strategies.
- Participants shifted strategies both positively (planned and opportunistic) and negatively (assisted/alternative).
- Geography and culture were significant barriers for both participants. However, language was not an issue for either participant.
- Time constraints due to teaching portfolios was another barrier. Participants leveraged their personal networks to overcome this barrier.

**REFERENCES**


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