



Lower Secondary School Teachers' Experiences of Developing Inquiry-Based Approaches in Information Literacy Instruction

ECIL 2017

Tuulikki Alamettälä & Eero Sormunen

Background

- Inquiry-based assignments / teacher-centered instruction
- Studies among practicing teachers suggest that IL instruction
 - is often weakly designed,
 - concentrates mainly on technical aspects and
 - leaves the crucial stages of the learning process without adequate attention
- Adoption of new pedagogical practices is a challenge for teachers

Guided Inquiry

- Phases:
 1. Open
 2. Immerse
 3. Explore
 4. Identify
 5. Gather
 6. Create
 7. Share
 8. Evaluate
- Collaborative forums:
 - Inquiry community
 - Inquiry circles
- Inquiry tools:
 - Inquiry journals
 - Inquiry logs
 - Inquiry charts



How do inquiry-oriented teachers develop information literacy instruction as part of their everyday school practices?

Research Questions

1. What kind of **pedagogical designs** do teachers develop for inquiry-based information literacy instruction?
2. To what extent were the observed pedagogical designs **similar** to the designs of Guided Inquiry?
3. How do teachers **experience** their possibilities and success in developing inquiry-based information literacy instruction in their everyday school context?

Research Setting

- a Finnish language and literature teacher teaching pupils from the 7th to the 8th grade
- three parallel classes (19–20 pupils per class)
- data from three out of six courses
- three modules for information literacy instruction:
 - modules 1 and 3 part of Finnish language courses
 - module 2 integrated into a joint project of Finnish language and history



Data Collection and Analysis

- thematic interviews (pre and post)
- observations
- handouts
- content analysis
 - descriptive
 - analytical

What kind of pedagogical designs do teachers develop for inquiry-based information literacy instruction?

- the teachers applied diverse assignments in IL instruction:
 - a brochure
 - a presentation
 - a fictive text
 - a speech

To what extent were the observed pedagogical designs similar to the designs of Guided Inquiry?

- Similarities:
- Phases
- Topics of pupils' own choice
- Inquiry tools (logs)
- Collaborative forums (inquiry community & inquiry circles)
- Learning team (teachers, no librarian)

How do teachers experience their possibilities and success in developing inquiry-based information literacy instruction in their everyday school context?

- + the pupils seemed to find topics that interested them
- + the pupils seemed to gain from cooperation between the two subjects
- + the pupils who used inquiry logs managed to synthesize information across sources more effectively than those who did not use them
- choosing the topic, finding and analyzing information was difficult for some pupils
- balance between phases
- technical problems and a lack of IT-skills
- not all pupils are attuned to working in a learner-centered way and are waiting for clear instructions



Future Research

- Survey data of pupils' online inquiry attitudes, self-efficacy and practices
 - Online tests of pupils' skills in searching the web and evaluation of sources
 - at the beginning, in the middle and at the end of the research period
 - both in the three test classes AND in two control classes at the same school
- =>Possible to analyze the long-term changes among the pupil population and compare them with the teacher's experiences

Questions? Comments?

Thank You! Merci! Kiitos!

Tuulikki Alamettälä
Doctoral Student
COMS, University of Tampere, Finland

tuulikki.alamettala@uta.fi