

INFORMATION BEHAVIORS OF USERS OF KOREAN COLLECTIONS:
HOW DO THEY FIND NEEDED INFORMATION?

BY

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THESIS

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Abstract

The Institute of International Education's 2012 survey shows that Korean international students in the USA add up to 72, 295 students, including 21,260 graduate students (Institute of International Education, 2013). A survey from Modern Languages Association found that despite the decline of students taking language classes, the students taking Korean language courses has increased about 45% between 2009 and 2013 (Goldberg, Looney & Lusin, 2015).

For university in the Midwest United States, hereafter UMUS, South Korea is the second largest sender of its students to this university, following China (International Student and Scholar Services, 2015). Many of these students' research topics and extra-curricular activities revolve around diverse facets of Korea. The Korean language courses at UMUS follow the national trend, experiencing about 35% increase in its enrolled students past five years (Song, 2015).

With the increase of interest in Korean culture and a large population of Korean students, the library's Korean collection is bound to have an increased rate of circulations and programs geared towards this rising population. However, the use of library collections does not reflect the campus or higher education climate of increased interest in Korean studies and Korean language courses as stated above.

This study will investigate the information behavior of students searching for Korean materials at UMUS. In examining students' behavior during searching processes for materials in Korean Studies, I will discuss how users utilize the university library for print and e-resources. This study will identify gaps in information retrieval process and discuss recommendations for Korean collections.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Research

Introduction

The great Chinese military strategist and the author of Art of War once said know your enemy and know yourself, and then you'll never lose (Tzu, 2007). In today's world of libraries, the enemy would not be people armed with sword and shield per se but knowing the opponent, or the people one is providing service to, will be a huge advantage. Thus, user studies are an important area of research, as they profile user behaviors and identify the need to initiate diverse programs and services in academic libraries.

User studies of patrons of Korean collection have been overlooked by scholars and researchers because of the marginality of the collection. This study attempts to fill the gap in the literature by utilizing Dervin's sense-making theory and grounded theory to analyze information behavior of users of Korean collections.

Background

The Institute of International Education's 2012 survey shows that Korean international students coming to the USA total 72, 295; of whom 21,260 are graduate students (Institute of International Education, 2013). A university in the Midwest United States, hereafter UMUS, boasts holding third place in the number of enrolled international students from all over the world. South Korea is the second largest sender of its students abroad to this university, following China (International Student and Scholar Services, 2015). Many of these students' research topics and extra-curricular activities revolve around diverse facets of Korea. This is demonstrated in over 790 digitized dissertations about Korea or topics related to Korea, many of which were

written by Korean nationals and students in Korean studies. In addition, there are over twenty ethnically themed registered student organizations, with over one hundred members in the Korean Student Association (Song, 2015). A survey from the Modern Languages Association found that despite the decline of students taking language classes, students taking Korean language courses have increased about 45% between 2009 and 2013, far above other languages (Goldberg, Looney & Lusin, 2015). This is also true of the Korean language courses at UMUS. The campus has experienced an approximated 35% increase in its students enrolled in Korean language classes in the past five years (Song, 2015). Many guess that the explosive popularity of Korea media via online resources is partially the reason (Gordon, 2015).

With the increase in interest of Korean culture and a large population of Korean students, one might assume that the UMUS library's Korean collection is bound to receive more attention through circulation and resource requests. However, the use of library collections at the UMUS campus does not reflect the campus or higher education climate. Few studies have been done to assess the needs of the projected user groups of Korean collections.

This study will discuss the information behavior of students searching for Korean materials at UMUS using Brenda Dervin's sense-making theory (Dervin, 2015) and grounded theory (Pickard, 2007). In examining students' behavior during search processes for materials in Korean studies, I will discuss how the users utilize the university library on and off campus for print and online materials. This study will analyze students' natural behaviors in searching for Korean materials, identify gaps in information, and discuss recommendations for Korean collections. By being aware of the

information behaviors of this population, area studies libraries, international student services, as well as universities, can better assist these students with their information needs.

Purpose of the study

The study aims to investigate the information behaviors of the users of the Korean collection. Although some studies show information behaviors of potential user groups, including international students and graduate students, on the difficulties of navigating the library's catalog of another institution with a non-Roman script, a comprehensive study that incorporates multiple factors in using the collection is needed. By identifying information needs, gaps, and barriers, the library will be able to clearly assess the current status of the library's plans for reaching out and connecting users with needed information.

Some of the research questions for this study include:

- How do users of the Korean collection utilize print and online sources?
- Is the library involved during their research and/or dissertation process? If yes, how much or how little? If no, why not?
- What blocks users from using the collection?
- How does the information behavior change as information needs evolve over time?
- What is the role of the university library's Korean collection and Korean studies personnel?

User groups

Graduate students in Korean studies are comprised of a myriad of students from different backgrounds. These students may be international students from Korea, domestic students with Korean ethnicity, or students without any ethnic ties. English and Korean language skills of these students may vary, from novice to fluent. It is hard to find an average language proficiency of the users since each student comes with different levels of both languages. The backgrounds of these user groups may not share similarities. However, they are on the university campus to study at an American higher education institution. Their topics of research revolve around Korea and Korean issues.

Significance

This assessment is crucial for the Korean collection and other small scale area studies libraries. With the budget constraints and changing scope of the library, the former East Asian library of UMUS was merged along with other area studies libraries. Now, the International and Area Studies library serves as a hub for servicing all area studies library patrons. Because the Korean collection is smaller in size compared to other East Asian collections, it is important to pinpoint the exact needs of the users to provide services that meet their needs, and at the same time, services that do not sequester the collection inside the library.

Methodology for data collection

In order to pinpoint obstacles for users in the existing collection, I conducted in-depth ethnographic interviews with nine students who are researching Korea-related topics or those who are in Korean studies. Interviews consisted of set of fifteen questions and observations of informants' search methods. In doing so, I was able to distinguish

information gaps and various needs of users. By distinguishing these, libraries can work towards alleviating disconnects between users and information.

Interviews were done on campus grounds, preferably in public to semi-public spaces where there was access to the Internet for observation. All interviews were audio-recorded and field notes were taken during observations. This study is limited by its small sample size of nine students, who are graduate students humanities and social science, and by the duration of study, which was two months. Students were contacted individually via email or by instant messenger. The contact list was acquired through participation in Korean studies seminars and other networking venues, and through attending Korean Studies Advisee group of a professor in Korean Studies. The study was limited to graduate students in order to permit in-depth interviews regarding information behaviors and user services.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Theoretical frameworks

Information behavior

Information behavior describes the diverse ways people seek out and use information. Understanding how individuals or people in a certain group interact with information is a field of study commonly used in library and information science (LIS) to better serve library users (Bates, 2009). The term “information behavior” encompasses studies formerly called information seeking, gathering, needs and uses (2009).

Studies on information behavior have been on the rise since the early 1970s (Case, 2012). What started out as scholarship on information-seeking behaviors of professionals and researchers has spread to wider and more specified populations like those of refugees, homeless people, students, residents of developing countries, and people looking for health information, just to name a few. Alongside user groups, authors distinguished other variables that may influence the search behavior such as subject expertise, personality types, learning styles and cultural differences (Case, 2012). This chapter reviews existing scholarship about information behaviors of population groups that may use the Korean collection and posits a theoretical and conceptual framework of study.

Models of information behavior

Information behavior is in play everywhere. Since theories and/or models of information behavior are derived from natural information behaviors, multiple theories and models coexist, coincide, and sometimes complement each other in any given

society. Although the line between theories and models is sometimes unclear, Fisher states that models add on to the development of theory (Fisher, 2005). Tested models become theories once their validity has been proved. The models are useful in describing what is happening now and can help indicate future directions (Fisher, 2005).

Dervin's Sense-Making Theory. The first theory on which I based my study is Dervin's Sense-Making theory. This is used to understand the relationship between communication, information, and meaning (Fisher, 2005). This theory is used in LIS in application to its users and systems (2005). It uses the situations-gaps-uses process in which users of information play an integral part. As users of information move through situations, they are stopped due to a gap or "difference between the contextual situation and the desired situation" in information (Wilson, 1999, p.253). As users bridge the gap or uncertainty, sense-making or sense-unmaking occurs (Fisher, 2005). According to Reijo Savolainen, and as shown in the figure below (Figure 1), the bridging of the gap can mean many things. These bridges can be "ideas, cognitions, thoughts, attitudes, beliefs, values, feelings, emotions, intuitions, memories, stories, and narratives" (Savolainen, 2006, p.1117). These lead to various forms of information use.

Gap bridging can also lead to identifying the issues that disrupt the use of information (Wilson, 1999). Over time this theory has evolved and developed. Now it also stresses the "importance of energy and forces that impel, assist, and facilitate movement, as well as constrain, hinder and limit it (Savolainen, 2006, p.1117)."

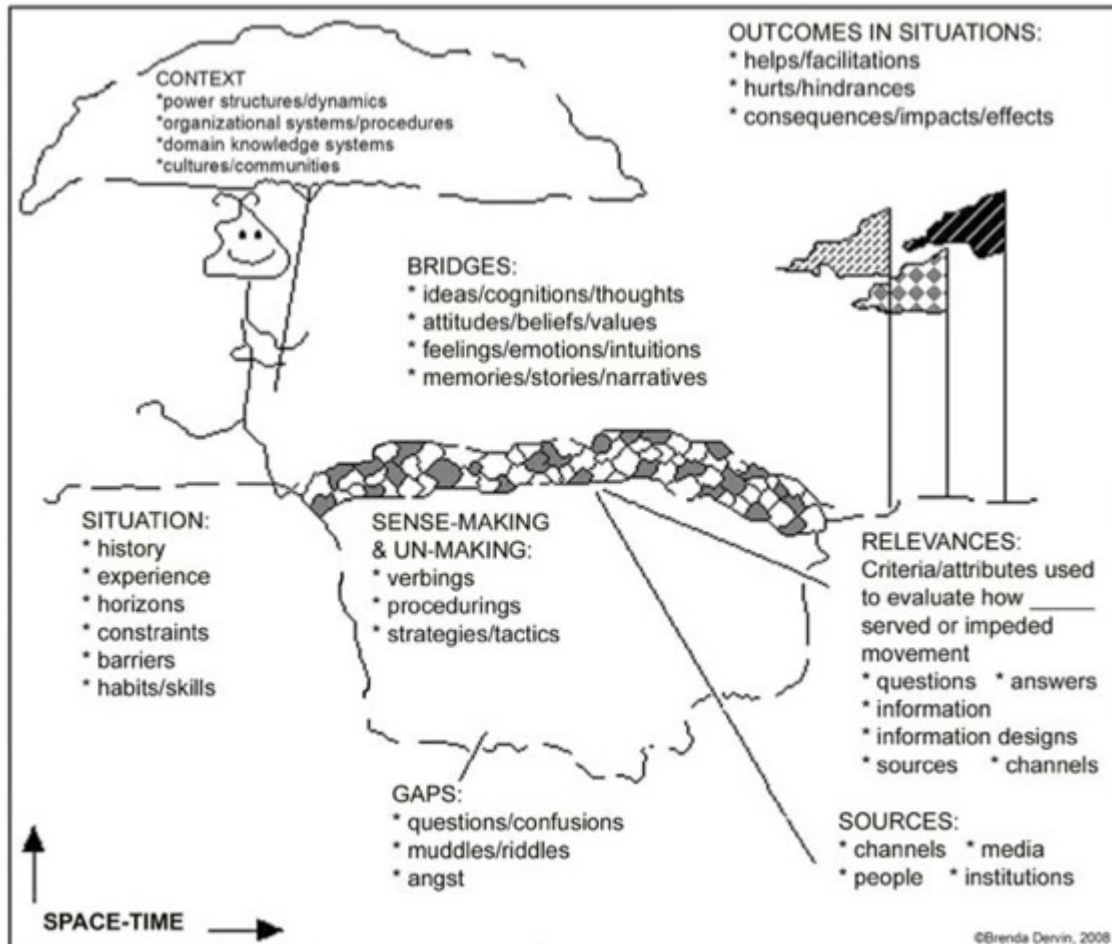


Figure 1: Dervin's sense-making metaphor (Dervin, 2008, p. 17)

Grounded Theory. The second theory that will be utilized in this study is grounded theory. Grounded theory is not goal oriented, nor does it exist to offer answers to a specific question or confirm a hypothesis (Pickard, 2007). The point of the grounded theory is to embody the participants, in this case, users, to view their perspective on things. The result is the discovery of the nature of information behaviors to generate a theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). Therefore, studies using grounded theory often do not have relevant theories or previous empirical studies available to inform them. It is the

role of the investigator to initiate a theoretical account that generates discussion based on the data collected to serve as a building block for a formal theory (Case, 2012).

User groups

Korean international students in the United States

International students make up a significant percentage of university populations in the United States. Thus, observing their information behaviors is a necessary research undertaking. Studies over the past twenty years have identified three major difficulties related to information retrieval to be: 1) lack of language proficiency, 2) the students' unfamiliarity with the library systems in American universities, and 3) differences in expectations between American university and the universities of the students' mother country (Ishimura, 2012).

One of the user groups of the Korean collection at UMUS is Korean international students, a group consisting primarily of South Korean children from middle to upper class families. They are viewed as the intellectuals of the society who will usually return to South Korea to become professors in Korean universities or stay abroad to become professors in other countries including the US. The reason for studying abroad may vary (Kim, 2012). Whether it is to gain higher social class positioning upon return, to learn English to be competent global scholars, to escape gender inequality, or to expand their job opportunities, they concluded that studying in the US is better than staying in their homeland.

Authors agree that this group has many qualities that make them distinct from other user groups. Although they are viewed as intellectuals among the society of origin, in the US, they are suddenly looked down upon because of their lack of English language

proficiency (Jeong, 2004). Different from American learning environment, Korean classroom culture is still mainly based on the clear hierarchy passed down by Confucian beliefs. Behaviors that characterize class discussion in American universities, such as talking back, asking questions or even making sustained eye contact with the professor or instructor are not welcomed. People who speak too much are viewed as not serious (J. Kim, 2012). In the US, many Korean library users are confronted by financial constraints, compounded by academic stress, and therefore some find it hard to come out of their comfort zone to venture on to mainstream American culture. The comfort zone in this case tends to be people of the same ethnic group (Jeong, 2004). Students frequently socialize and get tied down to ethnic, social, and academic groups that are comfortable places where they do not have to think about not being able to speak and communicate well. However, this can prevent them from becoming active gatherers of information. They yearn to part of the American mainstream culture yet do not want to step outside of their comfort zone. That is why many of these students' everyday life information-seeking happens within ethnic groups or in Korean churches (Jeong, 2004). This leads to a "small-world" environment (Chatman, 1991).

A small-world is a socially constructed environment where participants create their own significance and communications, and thus may create biased information access and use (Burnett, 2008). Their initial draw often has little to do with information sharing, however, interactions that occur in the environment may lead to access and sharing of unguaranteed information (2008).

This is true for the small-world environment of Korean ethnic groups or churches. Information circulated within the groups was sometimes valid and useful, but many times

it manifested as misinformation, inaccurate and/or low quality information, with or without the deliberate intention to deceive each other (Jeong, 2004).

Jeong's 2004 findings identified language barrier, geographical isolation, infrequent access to and use of U.S. media, and infrequent contact with a host national as obstacles of information behavior for Korean international students (Jeong, 2004). However, over the past decade, with the advancement of technology, language and cultural barriers have decreased (Liao, 2007). Because many international students are comfortable with technology, they use various types of search tools and are not afraid to use unfamiliar library services by asking for help by contacting librarians and attending information literacy workshops (Liao, 2007). Academic libraries have become the essential go-to place for information seeking. Although everyday life information seeking still usually occurs within their ethnic group, students are less dependent on their small-world and venture out into mainstream America through their Internet searches.

Graduate students

Because of their various levels and wide range of study and disciplines, graduate students make up a distinct population of information gatherers. According to Barratt (2005), information behaviors of graduate students in the humanities, who are the most frequent users of library area studies collections, resemble information behaviors of their faculties than undergraduate students. Graduate students have less information anxiety when searching for research materials compared to undergraduate students (Leckie, 1996). Graduate and undergraduate students conduct research projects as a result of course assignments. However, unlike undergraduate students, the anxieties of graduate students are not about failing the course, rather they are about finding time to conduct

research, which makes them more similar to academic faculty. This was especially true for students who were teaching and were involved in other research projects. Distinct from faculty and undergraduate students, graduate students depend heavily on their advisors' and instructors' guidance during the research process due to lack of personal expertise in the early stages of their academic career (Barratt, 2005). After consulting with advisors, students turn to librarians and peers for input although they know that they themselves need to go into the library to find resources (Beile & Boote, 2005).

Information needs evolve over time for graduate students from their years doing course work to the dissertation stage. Studies found that individualized instruction is more effective with graduate students, especially for those who are in the dissertation stage, because the student has the chance to address unique research questions and methods during the research process (Catalano, 2013). Catalano also suggests the separate treatment of masters' courses and doctoral students, especially in the later stages of study, since their needs diverge greatly (2013).

Finding Korean materials

What good is material if the users do not use it? The users' information behavior should come into consideration at the cataloging stage. Information behavior relates directly to the quantity and quality of retrieved information. However, cataloging materials in languages that do not use the Roman alphabet is one of the most complicated and oldest issues confronting LIS professionals. (S. Kim, 2006). SungKyung Kim, a cataloger for Korean materials, found various problems with students' search methods. The most difficult issue was Romanization. Through Romanization, titles that do not use the Roman alphabet get a Latin counterpart. This process involves transliterations of

Korean titles so that they can be entered into cataloging systems that support the Roman alphabet. In order to have a set guideline for libraries abroad, most Korean collections in North America follow the Library of Congress' McCune-Reischauer Romanization system (Shin, 2003). The author found the irregularity and obscurity of the application due to sound changes in the Korean language that make it hard to use and catalog (S. Kim, 2006). Those who are not familiar with the Romanization guidelines often have hard time converting their search terms from Korean to Romanized alphabets. For example, the guideline will Romanize 인류학, anthropology, into *'illyuhak'*, incorporating the sound change that occurs when the final consonant of the first syllable block 'ㄴ' meets the consonant 'ㄹ' of the second syllable block. There is a high chance that a novice patron who is looking up this keyword will Romanize it as *'inryuhak'*, following the sound of each syllable block. Others may write *'inlyuhak'* since there is no sound difference in 'l' or 'r' for Korean language. Both of these keywords with faulty Romanization counterpart retrieves zero search results. This is one of many errors users make regarding actual Romanization.

Word division is another significant concern using the McCune-Reischauer Romanization scheme. Following the Library of Congress Romanization tables, a space should be used to separate words and particles, which disorients Korean users. In Korean language, a particle rarely stands by itself. Users of Korean collections are almost always unaware of this guideline and will have drastically different information retrieval experiences. A patron who is searching for 한국의 전통, traditions of Korea, will retrieve no results with Romanized keyword *'Han'gukŭi chŏnt'ong'*, which has the pronoun

'Han'guk' and particle *'üi'* attached. Yet, the same search term with particle spaced out, *'Han'guk üi chǒnt'ong'*, will yield 113 results. Even though catalogers and scholars are aware of current Romanization systems' limitations, it is extremely difficult to propose a plan to alleviate the problem efficiently (2006).

Lessons from the literature

This chapter has looked at existing literature to look at studies on user groups' information behavior, issues with existing cataloging practices and theoretical frameworks I will use to assess the information behavior of users of Korean collection. Although studies on information behavior of user groups have shown unique character traits for each group, they do not specify behavior towards Korean collections. I will investigate the current status of information practices of the user groups by building upon present literature, highlighting difficulties in retrieval process, and by applying theoretical frameworks.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

This chapter outlines research methods used for the study. This study was designed to assess current information behaviors of users of the Korean collection at the UMUS' university library. Usage of the Korean collection includes print materials, database usage, and physical library usage. In order to answer proposed research questions from Chapter One, data were collected using open-ended, in depth interviews, and observations of a small sample of graduate students pursuing degrees ranging from Master's to PhDs, with ranging proficiency in the Korean language.

Methodology

Participants were individually contacted via email or instant messenger in February and March of 2016. The contact list was acquired through participation in Korean studies seminars and other networking venues, and through attending Korean Studies Advisee group of a professor in Korean Studies. Because of my participation and attendance in activities above, I had a prior knowledge of their study in Korea or Korea-related studies. Nine graduate students agreed to participate in the interview. The description and purpose of the research were thoroughly explained verbally and in written form, and participation was completely unpaid and voluntary in nature. Participants were able to decline or withdraw from the study at any time. To ensure the confidentiality of their identities, names were not used in transcribing data and consent forms are kept in a separate and protected storage container. No records linking the participant to the identifiable descriptions were created or used. Also, pseudonyms were used in reporting

the results of the study. Although participants should not experience any risks beyond those of ordinary life, they were given contact numbers of the responsible project investigator for any concerns or questions. Lastly, participants did not benefit in any way for participation in this study. Upon verbal explanation, and with full understanding of the risks, two consent forms were signed. One was to be kept by the participant and other returned to the project investigator.

Interviews and observations

Interviews and observations on search methods were conducted simultaneously in March, 2016 and lasted up to forty-five minutes per person. Set of 15 questions were asked followed by observation of their search process. Audios of interviews were recorded and field notes were taken during the search processes. The format of the interviews consisted of open-ended questions and answer followed by an observation of the following categories of behavior patterns. Participants were interviewed in the language of their choice to assure more in-depth answers.

Information literacy

According to the Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education set out by the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL), information literacy is a “set of abilities requiring individuals to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information” (Association of College and Research Libraries, 2000). In an environment where overflowing sources of information and various routes to needed information exist, information literacy is emerging as one of the most important factors of users in higher education. Especially for graduate students who conduct research

individually as well as collaboratively, information literacy acts an essential tool for more effective learning. Interview questions and observations looked at ways to evaluate user's current status of, potential barriers to, and means of overcoming the barriers to information literacy.

Accessibility of Korean collection - Print collection. Familiarity with the collection is essential in locating needed information. However, there are many factors that hinder users from accessing the Korean collection. Historically, many East Asian collections in the US have been housed in a separate collection to draw patrons' attention and to make it easier to browse, somewhat alleviating the problem of failed library searches using Romanized Korean titles (Dunkle, 1993). As stated in Chapter Two, searches using Romanized keywords create difficult access points and disastrous information retrieval. Although the issue of Romanization is partly solved by adopting Unicode, which allows vernacular language into the system, this factor is many times unknown to the users (Kim, 2006).

The circulating Korean collection at UMUS is not separated by its own language but is now a part of the Library's Library of Congress stacks collection, shelved based on call numbers regardless of language. Reference materials are housed in the reading room of the International and Area Studies Library, interfiled with other East Asian language materials. Interview questions were designed to assess patron's physical and online library catalog access to Korean materials.

Accessibility of Korean collection - Digital resources and databases. Digital resources for the Korean collection include access to online databases and resource library guides. Patron access to these resources depends heavily on knowing about the

existence of the available sources. Access points to these resources include the Korean studies webpage of the International and Area Studies Library and the Library website under various pull-down menus and online journal and database webpage. Getting to these resources requires users to navigate through many initial webpages, which creates problems in finding resources to use in the first place. Open-ended questions were asked regarding users' knowledge of the available online resources, and, for users who knew about these resources, observations were made on how users navigate through the library and/or other websites to get to these resources.

Comfort with information technology. Technology comes into play in every aspect of research. In 2005, Barnett claimed that students in humanities and social sciences are not known for being as tech-savvy as colleagues in other disciplines, they are open to new technology if it proves to be efficient and effective (Barrett, 2005).

The participants' ages ranged from mid-twenties to late forties. McCausland (what year?) states that older people tend to expect negative feelings when using technology in a given task compared to people who are under thirty (Barrett, 2015). This negative expectation feeds into negative experiences overall, which then becomes a barrier to technology. Interview questions were constructed to ask if their comfort level with information technology had effects on using the Korean collection and resources.

Information literacy education. Instructional designs to promote effective information literacy are made in various forms such as courses, classes, series of workshops, drop-in sessions, recorded tutorials, and library guides etc. (Association of College and Research Libraries, 2000). Librarians and/or library personnel visit classroom sessions or have classes visit the library to learn about available resources and

meet the staff. The university library at UMUS offers combinations of all of these forms of information literacy education listed above, with the added option of scheduling individual appointments with subject specialist librarians. Interview questions were constructed to assess if any of the participants made use of any of the information literacy sessions followed by their explanation as to why they chose to make use of them, or not use them.

Information gathering through networking. Many graduate students seek information collaboratively (Lee, S. 2013). This is because information searching is not a sequestered activity but rather a joint venture with colleagues, faculty and staff (Kuhlthau, 1993). Lee suggests that a cooperative information search process yields outcomes that are diverse, effective, and robust in quality (Lee, S., 2013). This is because human beings are social animals with a natural instinct toward working in groups (2013). As stated in Chapter Two, graduate students have the tendency to rely heavily on advice and suggestions from their professors, and colleagues, and to make use of other networking venues. Interview questions were designed to discover the different types of networking and personal contacts important for users of Korean collection during their research process. Also, questions regarding users' reliance on library personnel were asked to explore ways in which students had interpersonal contact with library staff at any stage of their research.

Dissertation or thesis topics. For graduate students, selecting a dissertation or thesis topic is one of the most important tasks in completing the program. Students think and research deeply about the topic of their dissertation, and a number of factors inspire the final selection of the topic. Although students are encouraged to choose original

topics, these topics do not spring up from a void. Ségol (2014) stated that some of the factors that influence the student in selecting the topic are quite practical. A faculty advisor's preferences and expertise, along with accessibility and quality of data are factors that are unavoidable. Interview questions were asked regarding dissertation or thesis topic selection process in order to gauge if use of the Korean collection came into play at any stage of the selection processes.

Language barriers. Language barriers present a problem in information retrieval. For non-native speakers of Korean, whose proficiency in the language is less than perfect, keyword searches or other common search techniques that are natural for native speakers of Korean are not easily conceived. These users depend heavily on articles and books about Korea in English. Although numerous journals and books are available in English, getting access to primary sources still poses problems. Even if these users locate a potential resource, there is an extra step for them to read and translate the resource before they put it into use.

This is true for international students looking for English materials as well. Especially in the early stages of their study, users need to locate English language materials regarding diverse topics. However, less than perfect proficiency in English blocks them from locating and fully understanding the topic of interest. What they thought were English equivalents of a certain topic in Korean may have a totally different meaning and connotation in English. This issue poses many barriers and gaps to information.

Interview questions were asked regarding barriers to looking for primary sources, or resources that are in Korean, and sources in English.

Sense-making strategies. As stated in Chapter Two, part of the sense-making or sense-unmaking process involves bridging these gaps. The gaps can range from questions or confusion, to other roadblocks during the research process (Dervin, 2008). In turn, bridges can include thoughts, ideas, beliefs, emotions, narratives, and people. Many times, users of the Korean collection are faced with gaps of some sort when using the collection. The categories above show some of the gaps users can face. Through interviews, observations were made about the ways users bridged these gaps through the sense-making or unmaking process, with or without the help of the library.

Chapter 4: Findings

Introduction

This chapter details research findings on the categories of behavior patterns of graduate students researching the topic of Korea. The first section lists the demographics of the participants. Subsequent sections discuss the categories that emerged in the interviews and observations section of Chapter Three, and explain in detail of the results of the interviews and/or observations.

Participant demographic

Participants were asked questions including approximate age group, degree program, department, and disciplines of study. Background information asked in interviews was used to determine the demographics of the participants. The range and summary of participants are listed below:

- Two were in mid to late twenties, four in their thirties, and three in their forties.
- Two were Master's students and seven were Ph.D. students.
- Of the two Master's students, one was in the first year of a two-year program, and the second was in the second year of a two-year program.
- Of the seven Ph.D. students:
 - Three had not yet taken their preliminary exams.
 - Four were done with preliminary exams and fieldwork but had not yet completed their dissertations.
- Four participants were from the department of East Asian Languages and Cultures, with two of them specializing in history, one in linguistics, and one in cultural anthropology. Two were from Education Policy Studies, and three were from Anthropology,

- Two were non-native speakers of Korean language whose language proficiency levels were beginning and high intermediate, and seven were native speakers of Korean.

Information literacy

Accessibility of Korean collection

Print collection. Most participants were aware of the Korean print collection in the university library. They have either been to the physical library and the International Area Studies Library to study and to browse reference books and serials. However, all, except one, voiced anxiety about using the library catalog to locate Korean material. Their initial experience led to avoiding future searches using the library catalog for Korean materials.

Two participants made use of WorldCat, or the library's Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) to find materials because they knew that there was a specialized interface for the university and that searching in vernacular language, in this case, Korean, is possible. For these two participants, the use of WorldCat was primarily for Interlibrary loan service, not to locate sometimes in the local print collection.

All of the participants were unaware of the fact that easy search on the university library's website allows keyword searches in Korean. Their experiences with the print collection usually began with fear of not getting the Romanization spelling and accent marks right and ended with the frustration of not retrieving wanted materials. After a couple of failed attempts at Romanized titles or keyword searches, users' dependency on finding print material through the university catalog diminished. One participant said,

It's like I can't really go on the library catalog for keyword searches for Korean materials. I would have to know that the book is here from other

sources like colleagues of mine and would then try to search the title. Even if I know for sure that the book is here, there are many occasions where I could not find it in the catalog because apparently I misspelled the Romanized title. It would be nice if there was a section for new Korean books with possible images of book covers online somewhere and listserv would be circulated periodically to inform us about it.

Similar concerns were voiced by multiple participants across the demographic. Although there is a section in the International and Area Studies webpage addressing this issue, no participants were aware of it. Also, when the “New Books” page was shown, the descriptions of the books were in Romanized script with no Korean at all, and participants showed immediate discomfort.

Digital resources and database. All but two participants were aware that the Korean Studies webpage within the International and Area Studies Library website. Two participants who knew about the webpage said that they stumbled across it. Although it contained useful information such as different subscriptions to the databases and free resource websites, it did not seem useful enough to make them come back. One user said,

It was just too much information for me. I wasn't researching at that time for anything, just browsing, but it seemed like links were useful in some ways but since it wasn't really useful at that moment, I kind of forgot about it.

Participants at the Ph.D. stage of their education all agreed that their information needs changed over time. During their MA years, needs were general and broad, but has shifted to more specialized resources as they started dissertation research. Their information searching pattern also changed from using the easy search bar on the library

website to going to a specific useful database and exploring with the subject headings from a useful article's detailed record. However, Ph.D. participants who were enrolled for a longer time voiced frustrations of locating digital resources. One participant said,

I think the library interface changed more than two times over the time I came onto the university campus. I get used to one interface and they change it out and once I get settled into the next interface they change it again. Then it's a maze once again. All of the databases and WorldCat I used to use is there, I know, but getting there takes time. I really like the interface one before where they had the WorldCat and library catalog and Interlibrary loan links on the front page, but with the new interface it was really hard for me to find it. I didn't know where the dissertations database went and had to search for it and finally realized that it was under specialized resources.

Although many voiced frustrations on changing interface, participants who are used to utilizing specific databases and catalogs continued to use them regardless of interface changes. It did take them extra time to locate it on the library website but because they knew that it was available, they searched through site search to find databases they wanted. However, participants who did not know that these databases existed did not continue searching the library website but turned to their peers for account username and password of a Korean university's database access or used their not-yet-expired Alma Mater's library account in Korea to get access to the same databases subscribed to by UMUS. They claimed that this was faster and easier for them since they are used to the interface and the language.

Two participants used Google Scholar to search for virtually anything regarding their research. They believed that it was the only method to search for Korean and English resources about Korea since it searched everything and adds the convenience of getting the full-text article when settings were made to connect the library's databases. Many also complained that they had to re-learn the interface every time they tried to use a new database, which is time-consuming and sometimes confusing, so they tended to stick to what is familiar to them. For those who used Google Scholar, dependence on the library webpage as an access point was lower than those who did not use Google Scholar. Also, all but one participant used the Google search bar as one of their major search processes and claimed that they sometimes found more worthwhile materials on it than with any other sources.

Comfort with information technology

Participants showed varying levels of comfort with information technology. Contrary to my initial assumption, age had little to do with embracing technology. The two participants who voiced hardships with using technology during their research process were on the opposite ends of the age spectrum. These patrons said that their skills in using technology hindered them from information retrieval and usage. The others were able to figure out where to get needed information and services, whether through the library or outside resources.

According to six patrons, their comfort level with information technology was achieved little by little, not all at one time. They listed themselves, colleagues and *sunbaes*, or their seniors, as key sources regarding information technology. Although they were using many time-saving technological tools in their research, all of them felt

that there were new things to be learned especially when they came to software and programs that are specialized for research. Many wanted to find out about the different ways Korean materials can be stored in citation programs, and how to use Romanization tools online to ease the pain of searching in the library catalog.

Information literacy education

All but one participant recalled receiving some kind of information literacy education either independently or as part of a class session. For this larger group, one of the introductory courses they took during their first year at the university included a class visit to the International and Area Studies Library to meet librarians and get introduced to different databases and programs regarding East Asian and/or Korean studies, or their disciplines. They found those sessions very useful and informative, yet most of them did not remember which tools were introduced to them.

None of the participants attended additional workshops or information sessions following the initial session. Many felt that the workshops were too broad and did not really address what they needed. They wanted one-on-one sessions about specific issues they have in their research process, but felt that setting up an appointment to meet the subject specialist librarians or library personnel was necessary. They were hesitant to ask because they thought that it took time away from the librarians' busy schedule. This is shown in the following excerpt from the interview.

I would try my best to resolve any issues and questions about the library material I have by myself first. In many cases, I am on a time constraint and emailing the librarians for help or to set up an appointment seems like another step or set of steps I am making for myself with no guaranteed

outcomes. Besides the librarians are busy with things they do. What do they do exactly? Anyways I don't want to bother them and have them make time for me. Also, I don't want the library to buy materials for my research because I know that I am going to be the only using it. They do not need to spend their budget on me. Maybe having a designated time at our departmental building will be easier for some of us to get access to the librarians. Knowing that someone is there at that time and day will be easier for me to stop by and ask questions in Korean without burdening the librarian.

Two participants who met with librarians by appointment, were there to find more resources about their topic. Both agreed that the librarians were extremely helpful in providing information about different disciplines, and opening their eyes to what is available. Also, they found search tips and keyword combinations, as well as databases shown by the librarian to be very useful for future studies.

Information gathering through networking

Most of the participants were involved in solo research at the time of interview. All participants agreed that many if not all of the resources and services offered at the library came to them through word-of-mouth. This was especially true regarding the most current scholarship. Through conferences and peer meetings, Korean studies students build a network in which they find out about each other's research interests, and thesis and dissertation topics. Then when a member of the group finds a current article or other information about that topic, he or she would directly email it to the other member of the peer group.

The group also circulates their works in progress for feedback and guidance. Because many people in the group share a discipline and research methods, they felt that information shared inside is confidential among the group. News about an upcoming conference or valuable information tends to emerge within the group during casual conversations and over coffee. Many felt that this peer group was as important if not more important than the specialists outside the home institution for helping them find relevant materials.

Some mentioned librarians and library personnel as one of their important contacts during their research process. Many found librarians useful in finding a specific article or books that are hard to find.

Dissertation or thesis topics

When asked about processes for selecting a dissertation or thesis topic, all participants first mentioned their advisor as the biggest influence and a key player in the final decision-making process. Many said that the library came into play during the initial stage of information gathering about various topics related to Korea. Once a list of possible topics was submitted, participants discussed with their advisors about the feasibility and practicality of the topic. Availability of resources on campus was not really a factor in deciding the dissertation topic.

Two participants said that the library's Korean collection did not come into consideration when researching for possible dissertation or thesis topics because they knew that the UMUS Library did not carry any of the Korean primary sources. Although a small collection, the UMUS Library carries many primary resources in original print or a facsimile form. When told that there are some primary sources available, they

expressed that there is no way for them to know about them or even think to search for them.

Language barriers

Non-native Korean participants expressed strong frustration and anxiety in searching for materials in Korean. Of two participants, one said that although s/he can find terms in the dictionary, titles that are shortened or abbreviated caused confusion. The most frustrating part for one participant was not knowing if results offer information even remotely close to the topic. Since it took double, even triple, the time for a native speaker of Korean to read just the abstracts, these users often give up searching for any materials in Korean.

On the other hand, participants who are non-native speakers of English found that some of the interface and library pages with resources seemed too overwhelming to use. One participant said that during their first couple of years at the university, they had to buy or borrow Korean translations of the books required by the course they were taking just to get the idea about key concepts of the book. However, as time passed, participants all agreed that since English sources are more readily available and in many cases, are primary sources, they learn to read academic and scholarly works.

Sense-making strategies

Through interviews and observations, sense-making and sense-unmaking occurred. Participants went through numerous “situation-gap-uses” triangles in order to bridge the gap. The bridges used in some of the situations were colleagues, advisors, library websites, librarians, self-motivated researches, trial and error, information literacy instruction sessions, etc. Yet, not all gaps were bridged. Some gaps such as lack of

language proficiency, difficulties with using the catalog with Romanization, and adapting to different interfaces result in information avoidance, anxiety, and frustration.

Those who used libraries and library personnel as one type of bridge, found them useful in the long-run. However, most participants found it difficult to get the self-motivation to get to the librarians, and tried to find other bridges such as peer groups and other networks.

Chapter 5: Conclusion and Discussion

Introduction

This study assessed information behaviors of a specific group of users of the Korean collection in a university library. Although grouped into different categories of demographics, each participant showed distinctly different information needs, behaviors and methods in bridging these needs. Drawing from the key findings, results of this study will suggest ways for to small-scale area studies libraries and librarians to serve potential users. Finally, a discussion of the findings and implications for further study will be proposed.

Key findings

- **How do users of Korean collection utilize the print and online sources?**

Users of the Korean collection utilized the materials they could find, yet getting to the materials posed serious problems in search process. Unsuccessful searches led to lowered expectations of the library collection which led to overlooking some of the print materials that are actually available in the library.

- **Does the library come into play during their research and/or dissertation process?**

If yes, how much or how little? If no, why not?

During the dissertation or thesis stage, the library is not a key player in the decision-making process regarding the topic. However, libraries act as bridges between each stage of the dissertation regarding writing process, in which librarians help locate and compile lists of bibliographies.

- **What blocks users from using the collection?**

The main issue blocking users from the collection seems to be language. This can be the lack of proficiency in either, Korean or English, and also difficulty with Romanization rules. Repeated failures in searches result in avoidance of that search method and the perception of libraries' insufficient materials.

- **How does the information behavior change as information needs evolve over time?**

Although information needs change over the course of a research career, it was rare for participants to acquire new search methods. Most of the learnings about the information literacy occurred during the first two years of study. Participants developed initial search methods and widened their perspectives of the library services available, but did not seem to drastically change their whole search process. Haphazard searches during the Master's years or the first year of the Ph.D. program progressed to searching with subject heading keywords and differentiating how various catalogs and online databases work.

Participants in the later years of their dissertations tend to depend on their advisor and colleagues for the newest scholarship. This information was not usually gained through the library but through attendance and participation in conferences and seminars. Most of these participants talked about searching in databases and library catalog as a thing of the past.

- **What is the role of the university library's Korean collection and Korean studies personnel?**

This study indicated the important role of the personnel of the Korean collection. Creation of simple yet effective interfaces directing users to the database, staying connected and up to date on the materials that are acquired, and having a consistent time for patrons to come and meet the staff for reference questions were some of the needs expressed by the users of Korean collection.

In addition to the above needs, the study demonstrated the lack of awareness of the Korean collection to the participants and possibly to other potential users of the collection. It would be more fruitful for librarians to begin services such as initiating collaborations between other departments, student organizations and cultural centers to become a key player in multi-faceted university events that will help the library serve its student constituency.

Limitations

The criteria for this study has several limitations. The first is the sample size. Because of the small sample size, it is not possible to generalize the findings of this study to apply to all users of the Korean collection. Also, due to the fact that the sample looked at graduate students in the humanities and social sciences, the results cannot be generalized to graduate students in other disciplines or to undergraduate students. All of the participants were from one institution reporting on its Korean collection. This study cannot be applied to Korean collections of other institutions which may have different issues and elements guiding the collection. Lastly, the research called for participants to talk about past experience and search activities. Students may not recall all of the

instances of activities and situations that may have occurred which influenced their overall experience.

Implications for further research

This assessment is a preliminary study of the information behaviors of users of the Korean collection. It can be used as a basis for further research extending opportunities for deeper understanding of the wide range of users. Issues raised here may be considered at other institutions as well as in many other specialized language collections. The study sample can include graduate students of different disciplines and undergraduate students. Research methodologies can be altered to directly observe students' information behavior multiple times throughout a longer span of time to gauge effectiveness of information literacy interventions.

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Appendix A: Consent Forms

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
AT URBANA - CHAMPAIGN



Information Behaviors of Students Researching Korea Related Topics

Informed Consent

Description and Purpose of the Research

Audrey Chun is conducting research to fulfill requirements for degree fulfillment of Masters in Arts in East Asian Languages and Cultures.

This research consists mainly of ethnographic fieldwork, which involves interviews, as well as interpretation and analysis of information gleaned from these activities. The general purpose of ethnographic research is to learn the information behavior of students in Korean Studies and/or students researching about Korea or Korea related topics. Ethnography is a kind of research commonly done by scholars in social science fields like Anthropology.

Voluntary Nature of Participation

Participation in this research is completely voluntary. If you are a UIUC student, you may participate, decline, or withdraw from participation without any effect on your grades at, status at, or future relations with this institution or the University of Illinois. You may withdraw from this study at any time. To withdraw, contact the project investigator. Participants in all UIUC affiliated research must be at least 18 years of age.

Confidentiality

In this study, every effort will be made not to reveal personally identifiable information in publications based on this research. To accomplish this, no records will be created or retained that could link you to personally identifiable descriptions, paraphrases, or quotations. Your actions or things you say may be presented without specific reference to you, reference only by pseudonym, or combined anonymously with the actions and words of other participants.

Will my study-related information be kept confidential?

Yes, but not always. In general, we will not tell anyone any information about you. When this research is discussed or published, no one will know that you were in the study. However, laws and university rules might require us to disclose information about you. For example, if required by laws or University Policy, study information which identifies you and the consent form signed by you may be seen or copied by the following people or groups:

- The university committee and office that reviews and approves research studies, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and Office for Protection of Research Subjects;
- University and state auditors, and Departments of the university responsible for oversight of research;

Risks and Benefits

Your participation in this project should not involve risks beyond those of ordinary life. You will not be paid for your participation in this research project, nor is it expected that your participation will bring you any benefits, tangible or otherwise.

Contact Information

If you have any questions, concerns, or complaints about this research project, please contact the Responsible Project Investigator (RPI) or Project Investigator (PI):

Elizabeth Oyler, East Asian Languages and Cultures, 217-333-9168 or eaoyler@illinois.edu (RPI)

Audrey Chun, East Asian Languages and Cultures, 217-377-1538 or suechun@illinois.edu (PI)

If you have any questions about your rights as a participant in this study, please contact the University of Illinois Institutional Review Board at Suite 203, 528 East Green Street Champaign, IL 61820, 217-333-2670 or via email at irb@illinois.edu.

Consent Statement

I have read and understand the forgoing description of this research project, including information about the risks and benefits of my voluntary participation.

I give my permission for this interview to be audio recorded _____ (Please initial to grant consent)

Signature Date

Print Name

There are two copies of this form. Please sign both. Return one to the researcher and keep one for your records.

Appendix B: Certification of Translation



University of Illinois
at Urbana-Champaign

Institutional Review Board Office
528 E. Green St. #203, MC-419
Champaign, IL 61820
tel: 217-333-2670 E-mail: irb@illinois.edu
Web: www.irb.illinois.edu

CERTIFICATE OF TRANSLATION

For research conducted in languages other than English, the UIUC IRB must have all versions of the research material [e.g. consents, recruitment, instruments, etc.] in both English and non-English to be retained in the research file. A certificate of translation is also required to verify the translations are accurate. Those who translate the material are to provide a brief description of their qualifications, skills or experience for serving in this role and sign the certificate of translation form.

- **Translation:** It is acceptable for an investigator listed as research personnel to translate the research material.
- **Timing of the Translation:** the research investigator(s) may wish to delay the initial translation until after the IRB has reviewed the English versions. Doing so may help researchers avoid multiple translations.
- **Modifications:** If the non-English documents are submitted to the IRB after initial approval, please submit a research amendment form along with the translated material and a copy of the certificate of translation.

IRB#: 16513

Principal Investigator: Audrey Chun

Student Investigator [if applicable]

Protocol Title: Information Behaviors of Students Researching Korea Related Topics

Translator's Qualifications:

Statement of Translation:

Translator's Name (Print): Audrey Chun

I declare that I am fluent in and understand the English language and the Korean language. The non-English documents for the above-mentioned study dated, 1/25/2016 are a true and accurate of the English documents dated, 1/12/2016.

Address: 808 W. Springfield Ave Apt 2 Urbana, IL 61801

Phone: 217-377-1538 Email: suechun@illinois.edu

Signature:  Date: 1/25/2016

Version dated, 06062013

Appendix C: Sample Questions (English)

Sample Question Demographics

- What degree program are you studying at the University?
- What year are you in that program?
- What is your age range?
- Please describe your study focus/dissertation topic.

Sample Questions

- How often do you use the university library?
- What kind of activities do you do at the library?
- Have you been to the International and Area Studies Library (IASL) where Korean Collection is housed in?
- Did you know about the IASL's webpage?
- How do you go about finding information about Korea to use in your research?
- Do you know Korean?
 - If so, how do you use your language proficiency in order to gain access to information?
 - If not, what do you do with information found in vernacular language?
- If you are a doctoral student in a dissertation stage, how did you decide your dissertation topic?
 - Did you use the library at all during that process?
 - Did you use any of the Korean databases available through our library?

Appendix D: Sample Questions (Korean)

샘플 질문

인적사항

- 현재 대학에서 공부하고 있는 분야/학위가 어떻게 되시나요?
- 공부하고 있는 학위의 몇년차이신가요?
- 연령대가 어떻게 되시나요?

질문 예시

- 대학 도서관을 얼마나 자주 이용하시나요?
- 도서관에서 주로 무엇을 하시나요?
- 학교도서관에서 한국자료가 있는 국제 도서관 (International and Area Studies Library)에 가 보신적이 있으신가요?
- 국제 도서관 (IASL)의 웹사이트를 방문해 보신적이 있으신가요?
- 데이터 베이스 사용 방법이나 학교 카탈로그에 대해 배우려고 워크숍이나 사서를 찾아간적이 있나요?
- 한국에 관한 자료를 어떻게 찾으시나요?
- 한국어를 하세요?
 - 하신다면 정보를 찾을때 한국어를 쓰시나요?
 - 못하신다면 한국어로 된 자료들을 가지고 어떻게 하시나요?
- 논문 과정중에 있는 박사생이라면 논문주제를 어떻게 정했나요?
 - 그 과정중 도서관을 이용하신적이 있나요?
 - 우리 도서관에서 사용할수 있는 한국 데이터 베이스를 써 본적이 있나요?