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Student Preferences in Library Website Vocabulary

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Introduction

The library website represents an important component in the user experience. As library bookmarks and brochures may have seen a decline in use, the library website represents the "face" of the library. It showcases its print and electronic resources and it promotes services to students and faculty such as circulation, reserves, reference, library instruction, library events, and interlibrary loan. The library website displays information such as library hours, policy information, directions, the staff directory, and basic contact information. The library website is a living document, unlike a brochure, poster, or flyer.

The library website also represents a virtual space where information is collected, organized, and presented. When developing this virtual space, it is important to reflect the needs of the user (Manzari, 2006). Users must be able to locate the necessary information with ease. The website should be user-centered, current, relevant, uncluttered, and contain language that can be understood (Hamilton, 1999). Navigation must be intuitive and logical (Bernard, 2000). The library website should not only provide information but also be a learning tool (House, 2007).

When the World Wide Web first emerged in 1990 (Cailliau, 1995) one of the first text-only web browsers was WorldWideWeb and libwww. In the early 1990s graphical browsers were introduced and websites began to appear in color, with a variety of fonts, graphics, and other flashy components. The early 1990s saw some of the most vibrant websites with flashy logos, tables, frames, borders, and colors. Unfortunately, some websites contained too many flashy components that may have distracted users from important content.

For a library website to be effective, there must be a balance between content and design. The website must be *aesthetically* agreeable, adhere to design trends and etiquette, and most importantly, the content must be accessible and organized (Huizingh, 2000).

This study explores the language used on the library's website, namely the top-level page headings that direct users to specific sections of the library website. The library's website vocabulary may be confusing to some college students and the general public. For the purposes of this study, the term "library jargon" will be used to describe library website vocabulary.

What is Jargon?

Jargon can be defined as outlandish language of various kinds, such as speech perceived as gibberish or mumbo jumbo, slang, or, most commonly, specialized language of a trade or profession. To non-members of professional, occupational, and other groups, jargon is filled with terms and syntax that are not typical of general English and may impede understanding, but to members of such a group, jargon is familiar and serves its purpose well (McArthur, 1998).

Jargon is important because it fosters group identification and community. When professionals share a common "jargon", it may give them a sense of comfort and cohesion. In addition, specialized acronyms and expressions are easier to read and write. Finally, jargon may give a sense of authority or prestige (McArthur, 1998).

Jargon can be a problem. Jargon may confuse users and may act as a learning barrier. Jargon may inhibit communication when one person does not understand the terms used. If our users do not understand us in a library instruction class, or on the reference desk, then they may exhibit frustration and resentment. Finally, jargon may be perceived as elitist, pretentious, and unwelcoming (McArthur, 1998). Librarians do not want to discourage users from accessing our services and resources; thus, it would be in our best interest to avoid jargon when communicating with library users (McArthur, 1998).

Literature Review

The literature on library jargon and student learning is consistent. Authors either recommend minimizing the use of library jargon and some advocate avoiding it completely. Most recommend developing a glossary on the library website to provide an explanation of the terms used. The literature provides an overview of the most popular library jargon terms that users do not understand. As library jargon has evolved, library users have experienced different challenges over the years. Some jargon that was difficult to understand in the early 1990's may be extinct or irrelevant today. The literature also shows that different library jargon is used across different libraries.

Rachel Naismith and Joan Stein's 1989 article was one of the first studies that specifically targeted library jargon and student learning. The study was broken into two parts. Graduate students were asked to select library terms from the ten most popular library guides. To measure "popularity" [of the library guides], twenty five copies of the guides were placed on the display racks in the morning. Two days later, the number of guides left was calculated. The ten most popular library guides were calculated based on the number of students who took the guides off the display racks. The first two pages of those guides were given to students to circle what they thought was library jargon.

In addition to library guides, an equal number of terms were culled from reference transcripts. The transcripts were made into a two-page handout. Naismith and Stein ranked the terms by frequency. The 10 most popular terms were selected and twenty multiple choice questions were prepared. The questionnaire was tested against 100 freshman students and 51% answered the questionnaire successfully .The average number of incorrect responses was 10.2 out of 20 (Naismith and Stein, 1989). Most respondents answered the following terms incorrectly; proceedings (80), command search (75), multi-volume set (89), and citations (65). Most people responded correctly with the following terms; Interlibrary loan (75), microform (76), and bound journals (82). It is important to note that this article was written in 1989 and that many students today may not understand the terms "microform" or "bound journals" (Naismith and Stein, 1989).

Odin Jurkowski (2007) provides valuable data for studying library jargon. His article

explores website terminology in school libraries. The study involved two surveys; a survey completed by 84 school librarians and another survey completed by 81 students (32% elementary, 30% middle school, and 38% high school). Students were asked what terms they preferred out of a list of various library jargon terms. Librarians were asked to report on the jargon terms they used on their library websites. Jurkowski found that 25% of school librarians reported their library website lists the library catalog as "OPAC" and 17% reported that their website is listed as "Library Catalog". However, students preferred the terms "Books" (58%) and "Library catalog" (19%).

Thirty percent of librarians from both elementary and middle school use the terms "OPAC" while 28% of high school librarians use the term "Library catalog." For locating articles, 11% of school librarians reported that their website lists "databases," 11% list "online databases". Forty-nine percent of students preferred the term "articles" while 10% preferred the term "databases".

Approximately 17% of elementary schools use the term "online resources", while 14% of middle schools use "databases", and 16% of high schools use "online databases" . Finally, 12.5% of school librarians labeled "citing sources" when describing the link on the library website that directed users to learn how to cite their references. Ten percent of school librarians report their link as "bibliography guide". Thirty-one percent of students preferred the term "bibliography guide," while 22% preferred the term "citation help". Thirteen percent of elementary school librarians label this term "citing sources" and "bibliography guide." Eighteen percent of middle school librarians label this term "citation help." followed by 15% "citing sources." Fourteen percent of high school librarians use "citing sources" and "works cited" as their label for teaching users how to cite references.

Jurkowski's study reveals different library jargon used in elementary, middle, and high school libraries. His study also shows that students and librarians disagree on most terms on the library website (Jurkowski, 2007).

John Kupersmith's website www.jkup.net, provides a clearinghouse of usability studies on library jargon. As of September 2010, his website had an annotated bibliography of 51 usability studies. Kupersmith summarized his findings by listing the terms that are the most understood and misunderstood. He concludes that terms such as Library Catalog, Database, Index, E-Journal, Resource, and Interlibrary Loan are the most misunderstood terms by library users.

The most understood were terms that contained natural language such as "find books" and "find articles." He advises avoiding jargon, acronyms, and brand names for library catalogs. He advocates using natural language on top level pages. He also suggests providing a glossary on the library website where library jargon can be defined. Finally, he suggests providing multiple pathways to reach a particular section on the library website. His final suggestion is to be consistent when using library jargon (Kupersmith, 2010).

Brenda Battleson and Jane Weintrop (2000) studied a small sample of nine students from the State University of New York at Buffalo. The sample included two graduate students and seven undergraduate students. Subjects were asked to sort thirty four standard index cards into categories that would appear as links on the library website at the top-level and 2nd level pages. They discovered that "electronic resources" and "reference" were rarely selected. One-third used the term "catalog". Most respondents understood the term "course reserve" and used the term "Internet" often (Battleson & Weintrop, 2000).

Norman B. Hutcherson's 2004 study involved the selection of 32 jargon terms from library literature, reference desk experience, and classroom observation. He created two sets of surveys with fifteen multiple choice questions. The surveys were distributed during a seven- week period in various library instruction classes from September 2000 through June 2003. There were 297 completed surveys with 62.3% correct responses.

The most successful terms were plagiarism, reference services, research, copyright, table of contents, and synonym. The least successful terms were Boolean (8.10%), bibliography (14.9%), controlled vocabulary (18.10%), truncation (27.8%), precision (31.8%), and descriptors (35.8%). The most understood terms were search table of contents (90.5%), copyright (91.6%) research (94.0%), reference services (94.6%), and plagiarism (100%)(Hutcherson, 2004). It can be argued that plagiarism (as a term) is used across different disciplines so it was easy term to understand. It is evident that the least understood terms (Boolean, bibliography, and controlled vocabulary) are the most specialized to the library profession.

John B. Nicholson Jr (1958) analyzed the American Library Association glossary of library terms. From 159 pages, 637 terms were extracted from the first 50 pages. Of the 637 words, 51% were unique library terms, 30% were book trade terms, 13% were scholarly terms, and 6% were general terms. Nicholson found that library jargon is mostly composed of abbreviations and initials (Nicholson Jr, 1958).

Nicholson found that different librarians have their own set of jargon. He discovered that acquisitions librarians have a different set of jargon than catalog librarians or systems librarians. Nicholson shows that the library profession possesses an enormous variety of specialized language, some of it similar to the book trade, but over half (51%) uniquely related to librarianship (Nicholson Jr, 1958). Since librarians are a service profession, it is very important for us to communicate effectively with our users. It is important for our users to understand us; therefore we do not want to use language that would alienate them. Although Nicholson's article was written in 1958, it still holds true today.

Mark A. Spivey's 2000 article analyzed 60 academic library home pages over the course of one year. The libraries were chosen randomly and Spivey sought to determine any changes in library jargon or vendor label over the year. He analyzed the following targeted nouns; reference, reserves, periodicals, periodical indexes, indexes, special collections, and citations. In addition Spivey analyzed acronyms such as BI, OPAC, and ILL and vendor labels such as CINAHL, JSTOR, and ERIC (Spivey, 2000).

The websites were analyzed three times over the course of the 1998-1999 academic year. Spivey found that there was at least one instance of a library jargon change or an unexplained vendor label change occurred over the last year. He noted that there was less than one change in an acronym-based library jargon term over the last year. He recommended that library websites create embedded explanations for library jargon terms such as targeted nouns (from above), acronyms, and vendor labels (Spivey, 2000).

Karen G. Schneider's 2007 presentation "Death to Jargon" differed from the rest since she argued against using a glossary. She believed if a library website contained a glossary, then the terms needed to be rewritten (Schneider, 2007). She argued that jargon acts as a barrier for communication. She recommended evaluating the library website, "hunting down and killing all terms users do not understand" (Schneider, 2007) such as citation, database, e-journals, finding aid, index, interlibrary loan, online, periodical, reference, resource, serial, subject, and virtual.

Unlike other authors, Schneider advocated avoiding jargon altogether. She recommended using active, natural language such as "find books and articles", "answer a question", "find hours, locations, and events", and "pay fines, renew books, and place holds" (Schneider, 2007). She also emphasized the importance of assessment such as focus groups and surveys, as well as feedback forms (Schneider, 2007).

Anne Pemberton and Peter Fritzler (2004) argued that librarians should avoid library jargon because it inhibits learning. They illustrated that jargon not only depends on one's profession but also on demographics. They listed three sets of

jargon; library jargon, college student jargon, and physicists' jargon. They illustrated that some of us may understand jargon from different groups [that we are not apart of], but we should try to minimize library jargon because students already need to learn new jargon for their courses (Pemberton and Fritzler, 2004). They discussed how many academic library websites have guides for students to help them with library jargon. Pemberton and Fritzler concluded by indicating that they hoped to further investigate the issue (Pemberton and Fritzler, 2004).

Abdus Sattar Chaudhry and Meng Choo (2001) focused on library jargon used during the reference interview. They argued that library jargon alienates the library user and it negatively affects the reference interview. Their study identified the technical terms commonly used at the reference desk and they attempt to identify the terms that are the most and least understood by their users. To develop the assessment tool, a sample of 285 reference librarians' email replies was collected and 21 terms were culled from it. A questionnaire with 20 multiple choice questions was developed and given back to the 236 library users who posed the 285 reference questions. From the 236 library users, 40 respondents completed the questionnaire. Of the possible 800 responses (40 respondents answering 20 questions), 792 responses were collected.

Chaudhry and Choo concluded that 28 out of 40 respondents answered 75% of the questions correctly. Only 4 respondents answered less than 10 correct answers. The mean score was 15.2 out of 20. The five most difficult terms were resource file, microfilm, holdings, Interlibrary Loan (ILL), and citation. Twenty six out of 40 respondents had difficulty defining one of more terms. The five easiest terms were book drop, OPAC, self-check terminal, user education, and call number. Eighteen out of 40 respondents answered the questions based on guessing while 12 responded because they knew the definition (Chaudhry and Choo, 2001).

Laura Kaspari Hohmann (2001) illustrated some important criteria when designing user-friendly library websites. She emphasized the use of straightforward English when it comes to labeling various sections of the website. She discouraged librarians from branding their library catalogs (Sophia, Hollis, Rainbow, and Ferret, for example) (Hohmann, 2001). She also discouraged the use of acronyms such as ILL (Interlibrary Loan). She argued that librarians should conduct user testing such as putting the names of the sections of the website on index cards and then asking students to organize them into groups (Hohmann, 2001). She also stated that a consistent navigational structure, such as breadcrumbs, will improve the user's experience. Lastly, she recommended having a site index and a site-wide search engine that would help the user locate the information they need (Hohmann, 2001). Similar to Kupersmith, Hohmann illustrated the importance of consistency in language and in its visual appearance. Lastly, Hohmann recommended partnering with other professionals, such as graphic designers or marketing professionals, in order to create a clean and simple design.

Methodology

In the Fall of 2009, after receiving approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), a paper questionnaire was distributed to students before a library instruction class (See Appendix 1). At the same time, an electronic questionnaire was distributed to librarians across several library listservs (See Appendix 2).

To develop the questionnaire, the author selected the five most common library jargon terms from top-level library web pages. To collect the most common terms, the author reviewed the home pages of fifty randomly-selected academic library websites in Canada and the United States. Five library jargon terms were chosen: Library Catalog, Databases, Research/Library Guides, Inter-library Loan, and Writing and Citation Guide.

The author decided not to use common terms such as Library Hours or Contact

Us, because those terms are not considered "jargon". In addition, the author did not use the term "microform", even though it was listed in the literature. The author did not see "microform" on any of the top-level pages on the 50 library websites surveyed.

From the list of five library top-level headings, 27 related terms were culled for both questionnaires. Terms were taken from library literature, library instruction classes, and reference desk interactions. The librarian questionnaire contained an extra selection box per question with the term "Other". This allowed librarian respondents to add more responses that may not have appeared on the questionnaire.

The five headings were selected due to their popularity on the library's top level pages (for example, Library Catalog, Database, and Research Guides were the three most popular hits on the Library website of the author. That data was collected using log files.). Inter-library Loan and Writing and Citation Guide was selected because they had appeared across the fifty public and academic library websites.

Students were asked to complete the 6-question questionnaire before the class began and they were not permitted to consult the library's website. All students were over 18 and were required to confirm that they were 18 or older.

All student respondents attended the College of Staten Island, one of the 23 colleges of the City University of New York. The author continued to distribute the questionnaires throughout the semester and data collection was concluded in November of 2009. At this time, the author had garnered 300 responses.

The data was manually entered onto Survey Monkey, a web-based survey management tool. The questionnaire was anonymous and there was no way to link the data to any student since the student was not asked for their name or the course they were taking. Most library instruction classes at the College are given to freshman, so it is not surprising that 54% of respondents were freshmen.

Convenience sampling, was employed because it would yield the most results. Other methods, such as random sampling, may be more beneficial and representative of the student population. Library instruction classes are typically held Monday to Friday from 8:00am-10:00pm and fewer on weekends.

The data is not representative of the College of Staten Island student population, because some students at the College do not use the library, its physical building, or its resources or services. It should also be noted that most science courses at the College do not visit the library for library instruction. The data collected for this study was composed solely of Social Science and Humanities classes as well as introductory college writing for Freshmen students.

The librarian questionnaire (See Appendix 2) was distributed electronically in the Fall of 2009 to the following six listservs; CACUL, CANMEDLIB, MEDLIB-L, LIBREF, academicpr , and ili-l. The listservs comprised both Canadian and US colleges, universities, and health sciences libraries in academic institutions and hospitals. The questionnaire was sent twice and by the end of 2009, 527 responses (9.6%) were collected out of approximately 5,500 subscribers. Although the response rate was small, respondents may have subscribed to multiple listservs and only responded to the questionnaire once.

Findings and Discussion

The following tables illustrate the breakdown of responses from 300 students and 527 librarians. Both students and librarians were asked to select from the same list of vocabulary. The librarian questionnaire contained an extra selection box [per questions] entitled "Other". The "Other" box was added so librarians could include additional responses that may not have been included in the questionnaire.

Table 1: [Student Questionnaire] N=300

Freshmen	54%
Sophomore	16%
Junior	10%
Senior	15%
Grad Student	1%
Other	3%

Table 2: [Student Questionnaire] N=300

What term on the library website do you prefer if you are trying to locate books on your topic?

Library Catalog	26%
Find books	40%
Book Catalog	21%
Online Catalog	7%
Books	3%
Catalog	3%

Table 3: [Librarian Questionnaire] N=527

What term is currently used on your library's website that directs users to books?

Library Catalog(ue)	61%
Find Books	14%
Book Catalog(ue)	2%
Books	3%
Other (Total)	20%
Other-Online Catalog(ue)	5%
Other-Branded name	3%

Other-Search the catalog	2%
Other-OPAC	1%
Other-Find Books and More	7%
Other-Libraries Catalog	1%
Other-PAC	1%

Table 4: [Student Questionnaire] N=300 What term on the library website do you prefer if you are trying to locate articles on your topic?

Article Databases	33%
Find Articles	47%
Find Journals	4%
Databases	6%
Articles	10%

Table 5: [Librarian Questionnaire] N=527 What term is currently used on your library's website that directs users to articles?

Article Databases	8%
Find Articles	17%
Find Journals	0%
Databases	43%
Articles	3%
Other Total	30%
Other-Research Databases	11%
Other-Online Resources	3%
Other- Periodical Databases	3%
Other- Online Databases	3%
Other- Electronic Resources	2%
Other- Indexes and Abstracts/Abstracts and Indexes	1%

Other- Many labels go to the same place	5%
Other-E-Resources	2%

Table 6: [Student Questionnaire] N=300 What term on the library website do you prefer if you want to locate materials from other libraries (outside of CSI and CUNY)?

Find materials outside my library	66%
Interlibrary Loan/Inter-library Loan	12%
External borrowing	7%
Inter-University Borrowing/Inter-College Borrowing	11%
Inter-University Loan/Inter-College Loan	4%

Table 7: [Librarian Questionnaire] N=527 What term is currently used on your library's website that directs users to your Interlibrary Loan department?

Find materials outside my library	4%
Interlibrary Loan/Inter-library Loan/Document Delivery	51%
External Borrowing	0%
Inter-University Borrowing/Inter-College Borrowing	0%
Inter-University Loan/Inter-College Loan	0%
Other Total	45%
Other-Borrow from other libraries	15%
Other-Branded name	10%
Other- Resource sharing	0.4%
Other- ILL	10%
Other-We do not offer ILL	10%

Table 8: [Student Questionnaire] N=300 What term on the library website do you prefer if you need help with your research?

Research Guides	36%

Resources by Subject	20%
Research Help	18%
Library Guides	16%
Subject Guides	10%

Table 9: [Librarian Questionnaire] N=527 What term is currently used on your library's website that directs users to your web-based guides

Research Guides	17%
Resources by subject	17%
Research Help	11%
Library Guides	5%
Subject Guides	20%
Other Total	30%
Other - We do not develop/create guides	6%
Other -Pathfinders	4%
Other -Guides	3%
Other -LibGuides brand	12%
Other-Pathfinders	5%

Table 10: [Student Questionnaire] N=300 What term on the library website do you prefer if you need help citing your references?

Create Bibliography/Create Your Bibliography	52%
How to cite	16%
Cite your references	11%
Bibliography	11%
Cite your sources	10%

Table 11: [Librarian Questionnaire] N=527 What term is currently used on your library's website that directs users to cite their references

Create Bibliography/Create Your Bibliography	11%
How to cite	33%
Cite your references	0%
Bibliography	0%
Cite your sources	50%
Other Total	6%
Other -Citation Style Guide	3%
Other -Style guides for …..	3%

The results from the study show that students and librarians use similar language to access the library catalog and databases. Students prefer simple natural language and librarians use many terms to direct users to the same content on the library website. Forty-percent of students prefer "Find Books" compared to 14% of librarians. Twenty-six percent of students prefer "Library Catalog" while 61% of librarians use this term. Five percent of librarians also reported that they use branded terminology and acronyms (OPAC, PAC, and branded terms) to identify their catalog. The literature indicates that branding and acronyms may lead to student confusion (Singh, 2004) so the low percentage suggests that librarians are attempting to be more user-centered.

Forty-seven percent of students prefer "Find Articles", followed by "Articles Databases" (33%) when trying to locate articles. Sixty-eight percent of librarians report that the link to locate articles contains the term "databases". This percentage was calculated by adding up the terms Research Databases (11%), Periodical Databases (3%), Databases (43%), Online Databases(3%), and Article Databases (8%). It can be argued that most students prefer the term "article databases" or "find articles" because it contains the word "article" but most librarians report that they use variations of the term "databases" to direct users to their listing of online resources.

Many students may not understand the jargon term Inter-library loan. Sixty-six percent of students prefer the term "Find /get materials outside CSI/CUNY". Only 12% of students prefer the term Inter-Library Loan or Inter-College Borrowing (11%). Fifty-one percent of librarians report that "Inter-library loan" or "Inter-library Loan/Document Delivery" is used on their websites to direct users to their ILL department or service. Fifteen percent of librarians report that they use "borrow from other libraries" and 10% percent use ILL. The data above supports the literature that students prefer natural language and not jargon terms such as Inter-library loan, ILL, DD, or Document Delivery (Kupersmith, 2010).

Cumulatively, sixty-two percent of students prefer research guides (36%), subject guides (10%), and library guides (16%). This represents over 60% of students who prefer verbiage with the term "guide". Eighteen percent of students prefer the term "research help". It is interesting to note that the words "research" and "guide" are preferred by the majority of students. Seventeen percent and 20% of librarians report "research guides" and "subject guides" respectively as their links on their library websites. This shows that students and librarians are both prefer the term "guide" to denote a research tool to help students with their research.

Fifty percent of librarians reported that they use "cite your sources" on their library websites while only 10% of students prefer this term. Eleven percent of students prefer "cite your references" and 16% prefer "how to cite". Most students prefer the term ""Create Bibliography" (52%) and this could be because many students are familiar with "bibliographies" but not all are familiar with "citing". The low percentage of student comprehension to the term "cite" supports Naismith and Stein's finding that students prefer natural language terms (Naismith and Stein, 1989).

The data above is not representative of all CSI students. The data may suggest that freshman students (who represent the majority of respondents) prefer short, descriptive, natural language (e.g., find books, find articles) and familiar terms that they use in their everyday lives.

Limitations and Future Research

One of the limitations of this study was that the librarian questionnaire did not ask respondents to indicate the type of library where they were employed. Neither were they asked if they had a web committee that made decisions on jargon terms. The questionnaire did not ask if libraries had a glossary on their website that would explain jargon terms. This would have added interesting insight to the research.

The questionnaire also did not ask if the webmaster (or web librarian) was new to the profession. Perhaps newer librarians may use different library vocabulary that more seasoned librarians. It would also be interesting to examine any differences in library jargon terms from countries other than Canada and the United States.

For the student questionnaire, students did not indicate their fields of study. For future research, it would have been interesting to explore how students from different fields of study prefer library jargon terms. Would there be a difference between social science students and science students?

Students did not indicate their gender or age. It would be interesting to examine if gender or age plays a role in language preference for students. Further, it would be interesting to study student preferences based on year of study. The author was aware that most of the data was from freshman students.

For future research, it would be beneficial to create more focus groups where students can provide feedback on the best terminology for library websites. Each institution has its own culture and there may be notable differences between public library users and academic library users. Lastly, this data only focuses on CSI students who attended library instruction classes (mostly freshmen). In the future it would be interesting to ask these questions of students outside the library, remote users, nonusers, and the general community.

Conclusion

It is evident that students and librarians prefer different terms on the library website. "Research guides" and "subject guides" are terms librarians and students agree upon. Perhaps the term "guide" resonates with students, and librarians enjoy using it on their web pages. Twelve percent of librarians use the LibGuides brand for their research guides while others use more obscure terms like "Pathfinders" (5%).

It is evident that Librarians prefer terms that contain "databases" (68%) while students prefer terms that contain "articles". Librarians use "databases", in the broadest sense, because they locate more than just articles. *RefWorks*, for example, is a web-based bibliographic management tool that many academic libraries subscribe to. It is listed as a "database" on many library websites but it does not retrieve articles. Many students may not understand the term "database".

Many students may not know the difference between an electronic journal [*New England Journal of Medicine*] and a database [*ERIC*, *PsycINFO]* or a database vendor [*EBSCO*]. The electronic versions of *New England Journal of Medicine* are often listed as "databases" on many library websites but they are electronic journals. To students, anything that is searchable may resemble a database.

It is important to examine language and ask ourselves, "Do students understand this?" The data illustrates students' preference to natural language, like "Find Books" (40%), "Find Articles" (47%), and "Research Guides" (36%). As presumed, library jargon such as Inter-library Loan was not popular among students (12%). "Find/get materials" was preferred over the term Inter-library Loan (65% and 12% respectively).

Since libraries may have their own jargon, the literature suggests developing a glossary on the library's website with explanations of the terms (Kupersmith, 2010). The literature also suggests using plain language and avoiding jargon when possible (Kupersmith, 2010). The author suggests coordinating more focus groups to identify preferred terms that use plain language and avoid jargon. The author argues that many students may not have the time [or patience] to consult a glossary of library terminology, unless it is taught as part of the college's library instruction classes. Many students want instant information and if they do not understand a definition, they may move on to something else or give up altogether. As librarians connect users to their information needs, it is imperative to be aware of the language we use with our users.

The library's website provides many functions. It is a marketing and communications tool, a current awareness resource, a learning tool, and an information gateway. If librarians are expected to be excellent communicators at the reference desk and in the classroom, then the library website should complement the work of a librarian. The library website must contain language that is easily understood, consistent, and not riddled with jargon. Very often, the website is the first [virtual] place the user encounters before even entering the physical library. It is a living entity that needs continuous evaluation, revision, and maintenance.

Appendix 1- Student Questionnaire (N=300)

1. What year are you in?
    a. Freshman
    b. Sophomore
    c. Junior
    d. Senior
    e. Grad Student
    f. Other
2. What term on the library website do you prefer if you are looking for books?
    a. Find books
    b. Library Catalog
    c. Book Catalog
    d. Online Catalog
    e. Books
    f. Catalog
3. What term on the library website do you prefer if you are looking for articles?
    a. Find Articles
    b. Article Databases
    c. Databases
    d. Find Journals
    e. Articles

4. What term on the library website do you prefer if you need research help?
    a. Research Guides
    b. Research Help

c. Subject Guides
d. Library Guides
e. Web Guides

5. What term on the library website do you prefer if you need materials (books, articles) from other libraries (outside your college)?
    a. Find materials outside CSI or CUNY
    b. Get books/articles outside CSI or CUNY
    c. Interlibrary Loan/Inter-library Loan
    d. Inter-University Loan/Inter-College Loan
    e. Inter-University Borrowing/Inter-College Borrowing
    f. External borrowing

6. What term on the library website do you prefer if you need help creating your bibliography or works cited page?
    a. Create bibliography/Create your bibliography
    b. Cite your references
    c. Cite your sources
    d. Bibliography
    e. How to cite

Appendix 2- Librarian Questionnaire (N=527)

1. What term is currently used on your library's website that directs users to the OPAC?

a. Find books

b. Library Catalog(ue)

c. Book Catalog(ue)

d. Online Catalog(ue)

e. Books

f. Catalog(ue)

g. Other (please specify)

2. What term is currently used on your library's website that directs users to your list of databases?

a. Find Articles

b. Article Databases

c. Databases

d. Find Journals

e. Articles

f. Other (please specify)

3. What term is currently used on your library's website that directs users to your web-guides?

a. Research Guides

b. Research Help

c. Subject Guides

d. Library Guides

e. Web Guides

f. Other (please specify)

4. What term is currently used on your library's website that directs users to your Interlibrary Loan Service?

a. Find materials outside CSI or CUNY

b. Get books/articles outside CSI or CUNY

c. Interlibrary Loan/Inter-library Loan

d. Inter-University Loan/Inter-College Loan

e. Inter-University Borrowing/Inter-College Borrowing

f. External borrowing

g. Other (please specify)

5. What term is currently used on your library's website that helps users cite their references?

a. Create bibliography/Create your bibliography

b. Cite your references

c. Cite your sources

d. Bibliography

e. How to cite

f. Other (please specify)

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