**Luna, Ashley**

**LIBR 254 Information Literacy and Learning**

**Fall 2014**

**Instruction Observation Report and Analysis**

**Basic info**

* **Library (include type of library if it is not clear from the name; feel free to use an abbreviation or a pseudonym)**

Public Library

* **Librarian’s name (feel free to use just a first name or a pseudonym):**

Betty

* **Date and time of instruction session:**

Tuesday November 4, 2014

9:00 AM- 10:00 AM.

* **Content of instruction session (briefly—just the title or the central purpose):**

Computer basics in Spanish

* **Audience for session:**

The spanish speaking population who has a limited or basic knowledge of computers. Classes are typically in the mornings with mostly women attendees. Mothers are the primary targets and attendees for these sessions.

* **Other details:**

Currently the library wants to focus on basic computer literacy skill classes because reference staff has found a big need in the community among the elderly and Spanish speaking individuals.

**Pre-planning meeting with the librarian**

* **Librarian’s objectives for session:**

Introducing patrons with a basic understanding of computers and how to use them for basic tasks in the library. The librarian’s goals are to teach patrons a basic understanding of how to move and use computers. The librarian wants patrons to not feel afraid or anxious about using computers. She also wants them to feel motivated to learn more after the session on their own or by attending other sessions.

* **Librarian’s preparation for the session:**

Uses Denver Libraries curriculum/handouts for the session as a basic guide for the class.

Found here: <http://denverlibrary.org/ctc/computaci%C3%B3n-b%C3%A1sica-c%C3%B3mo-empezar>

Doesn’t always follow it because the patrons that attend often have varying skill levels so she often adjusts her plans to suit the needs of the class.

* **Other details:**

**Instruction session**

* **Details about physical space:**

Class was held in the computer section of the library, where typically patrons would use the computer. It was not held in a private classroom but in the central open area of the library. Computers are stationed in two rows back to back, with a clear view of the projector screen for demos.

* **Details about librarian’s manner**: Generally calm and helpful but a little anxious and upset about technology difficulties that occurred.She alsowalked around and checked up on students to figure out any difficulties they were having.
* **Details about students’ manner:** Students where a little quiet and a little apprehensive about asking for help.
* **Explanation of instructional events:**

Nine am doors opened to let students in and get settled in on their computers. There were about 7 students that arrived for the class. Handouts are made available at each computer with class information, computer help services and basic computer instruction in Spanish. As students are getting settled, instructor gets her computer and projector ready for the lesson. She talks about computer coaching services and library materials available at the library for further instruction and reference. After spending a few minutes trying to get the projector to work with no luck, asks students a series of questions about their skill levels to determine whether to move on or focus on the curriculum in the handout. After determining that they are at a very basic level, she then instructs students to practice clicking the mouse with a program designed for this purpose. The program involves a serious of exercises that involve clicking objects, text, buttons, Navigation bars and answering questions. The program is already up and running on the computer when the students arrived. She visits with each student to make sure the program is up, that the students understand the purpose of this exercise and that they are following the exercises.

In the meantime works on fixing the projector. Once that was unsuccessful again, she turns to using her laptop as a screen to point out important features of a window in a program or browser to give them a live demo. She showed them how to exit, minimize and change the shape of the window. She then instructs them to continue with the program on the computer. As students go through the program the questions revolve around real world computer situations, such as, ordering a pizza online. As students continue with the program she walks around and checks up on every student. Most students seem to need her help, but were hesitant to ask. She would stop with each student and notice they where having difficultly clicking, and would offer assistance. Students go through program until finished and are individually asked if they would like to learn how to use the computer, as they would see it in the library. She individually explains and shows them:

-How to log in to the computer using a library card and,

-How to browse the Internet from a library computer.

She asks them questions to determine their understanding and lets them practice logging in and searching the web. Since the student’s skill levels vary, some students needed more help than others. Most needed help with clicking the mouse, navigation and browsing at some point during the session. Since the session is only one hour, the instructor didn’t have time to continue with more instruction. She ends the session and encourages everyone one to come back next week for a session on email.

* **AASL standards or ACRL frames that you noticed:**

**AASL Learning standards:**

**1.1.6**

*Read, view and listen for information presented in any format in order to make inferences and gather meaning.*

The instructor explained how to use a mouse, log in to the computer with a library card and how to open and use a web browser. She also demoed these actions with them. The instructor also provided them handouts outlining the steps with text and photos, so that students can reference these materials when needed. The students had access to different formats to gather meaning in different ways.

**1.4.2**

*Use interaction with and feedback from teachers and peers to guide own inquiry process.*

The one on one instruction with students allowed students to ask questions and receive direct feedback from the instructor to help guide their own inquiry process. Students were able to finish the program and move on to the other half because they had feedback and direct interaction from the instructor.

**2.1.3**

*Use strategies to draw conclusions form information and apply knowledge to curricular areas, real world situations and further investigation.*

The instructor used software to help students feel comfortable with the moments of a mouse. The software included situations that a student would face when using and moving a mouse. For example, double clicking, moving navigation sidebars, picking options etc. The software mimicked these situations that could be applied to the real world. Students become familiar with how to move the mouse in certain situations and apply this knowledge outside of the session.

**2.2.4**

*Demonstrate personal productivity by completing products to express learning.*

Students were able to express learning by finishing the required tasks in the software used. When finished, students where able to implement what they learned in a web browser.

**2.2.4**

*Develop directions for future investigations.*

With the use of live demos and step-by-step procedures in the handouts provided, students have the tools available to develop directions for future investigations. Resources and services at the library were also recommended to students who want to learn more.

**4.1.4**

*Seek information for personal learning in a variety of formats and genres.*

*Encouraged students to use library resources, such as books, attending other classes and using the Internet at the library to practice using the computer.*

* **Instructional strategies employed**: Used Universal Design principles, by providing the information in different formats that include demo, text, visual and kinesthetic media. Incorporated active learning with activities that used software to give students hands on experience using a mouse. Most of the session was one-on-one instruction with students. This is great for students because the instructor can instruct students based on their skill level and show live demos of what should be done.
* **Other details:**

**Post-teaching meeting with the librarian (if this occurred)**

* **Librarian’s reflection about the session:**

The session could have gone better if it weren’t for the technology issues with the projector. All in all, the most important thing to come out of this session was to make patrons feel confortable moving a mouse and using a computer at the library. She has noticed that many patrons are afraid of breaking the computer because they do not know what to do. She wants to help ease those anxieties by allowing them to practice in an environment that encourages it.

* **Other details:**

**Reflection**

The instruction session that I attended for the Santa Barbara Public library took place in one of their smaller branches on the East Side. The class is offered on the eastside because there is a greater population of Spanish speakers. The class consisted of seven students, which is typically larger than usually for this type of session. The librarian stated that usually the average was about three. Since the classes are not typically large and only run an hour, some of the instruction methods and strategies used by the instructor are suited for smaller groups of students.

     During the instruction session, one of the most dominant methods used was the incorporation of an activity.  It is important to involve the students in activities that will engage them with the information and skills they are learning.  Keyser (2000) describes some characteristics of active learning that include an “emphasis on developing skills and less on transmitting information (36).” During my observation there was a greater emphasis on the computer activities to develop some basic computer skills.  The activities the instructor used involved using a program to complete different tasks that required the movement of a mouse and the navigation of  a web browser. These types of activities allow students to practice the skills they are learning right at the moment that they are learned. The more a student practices such movements the easier and more naturally it becomes to use and retrieve the skills learned at a later date. When students are not interacting with instructors or classmates and are not engaging with the material in a lecture mode they are passively learning. Keyser (2000) discusses the research on the use of lectures and points out that “Students’ attention to what the instructor is saying decreases as the lecture proceeds;” and “students tend not to like lectures (36-37).When students are passive learners it  is not effective for them because students lose interest very easily and don’t feel motivated to learn.

For this type of session, letting the students practice their computer skills is essential to retaining the instructor’s instructions. A lecture and demo would not be enough to retain the skills needed for a basic computer class.  Without the activities, students will listen to the instructions but will not understand how to implement it, till they have a chance to do so. At this point much of the information obtained at the session might be forgotten until the student takes initiative. The use of activities that include technology gives students the chance to engage in the material more actively. Since they are involved in the learning experience, they can draw their attention and focus on the content at hand.  Thus, It allows students to participate in the learning experience, instead of being passive listeners.

     Another strategy that is important to incorporate is the use of different formats for one session. In the session I attended the instructor provided a few formats. They were visual, verbal, and text. There was also the use of technology in the software program that involved visual and kinesthetic formats as the students interacted with the program. According to Chodock, Dolinger, & O'Connor (2009), When discussing Universal Design principles, all librarians should automatically have a multi-sensory teaching style that “includes visual, aural and tactile techniques” (26-28).Since we all retain information differently, variety ensures that most students have a chance to grasp concepts and skills. Universal Design techniques, such as, alternative formats seek to anticipate and plan for a wide range of users  (Chodock et al., 2009 p. 28). For students that are understanding and are in the process of retaining the information, the extra materials only serves to reinforce the information for later retrieval.  This would be another strategy that I would use for my own instruction sessions. I will want to make handouts available and supplement them with other types of media such as video clips and activities that include the use of technology. Creating visuals, using media, and handouts as well as encouraging active engagement with the materials will help reinforce the information I am trying to convey.

     Another strategy used during the session was giving students one-on-one instruction and feedback. The one-on-one instruction with students is useful for students because they get individualized guidance from the instructor. Students can also ask questions, without disturbing other students, and receive immediate responses. The instructor is able to tailor to the student’s skills and needs as she visits each student throughout the session. This strategy was effective in this situation as a backup method.  When the projector that was supposed to demonstrate the live demo failed, she needed another way to demonstrate to the students. Since it was a small group it was possible to visit with all students throughout the session to demonstrate

     In a bigger class setting, visiting with all students for the whole session is difficult. I would avoid this strategy for my instruction session because it is difficult to manage your time with all students.  Some students require more attention than others, so some students miss out from interacting and learning from the instructor.  During my observation, I noticed while the instructor was preoccupied with other students, students paused when they didn’t know how to proceed.  Given the short time frame some students wasted time sitting there doing nothing while they waited for the instructor to make her round towards them. I also noticed that because she was trying to make her round with everyone, some guidance was very short and rushed. Some students were not able to utilize her guidance as much as others and were hesitant to ask for her help when she was in the middle of instructing another student. This whole process was very time consuming and took the bulk of the instruction session. The instruction was also inconsistent because the learning curve for each student was different.  Although the class consisted of a small group of individuals, some of the instruction methods and strategies are not suited for all environments.

The most important thing that was taken from this instruction session and reflection is that students need to be given the right types of information. They also need to be given options in different formats to ensure that they understand the information given based on their learning style. We also want to help encourage lifelong learning through instruction sessions we offer. Even if the skills are as basic as learning to move a mouse, once learned it gives the students the opportunity to explore more resources and development more skills for personal growth and development.

References

Chodock, T., Dolinger, E., & O'Connor, L. (2009). Applying Universal Design to Information Literacy: Teaching Students Who Learn Differently at Landmark College. *Reference and user services quarterly*, *49*(1), 24-32.

Keyser, 2000. M.W. Active learning and cooperative learning: understanding the difference and using both styles effectively. *Research Strategies 17*(1), 35-44.