Dossier temático: Comportamiento humano informativo

Introduction to the dossier

Introducción al dossier

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Informatio, the Information Institute's academic journal, has invited me to organize a dossier in its first issue of 2023. A year in which we celebrate 30 years of research in User Studies/Information Behavior/Information Practices in the Information Institute (former EUBCA) of the School of Information and Communication (FIC) of the University of the Republic (UdelaR). After years of hard work, it is now possible to affirm that this is a consolidated line of research, which is reflected in its institutionalization, through specific teaching in subjects related to user research at undergraduate and postgraduate levels (Bachelor of Library Science and the Master of Information and Communication) and internationalization, with the continuous presence of our research in forums in different countries on four of the five continents.

To celebrate this milestone, we wanted to make this dossier a window into the world of user research. For this reason, as well as taking a look at the work we have done at UdelaR, we have managed to bring together contributions from

researchers from different countries that offer us a vision of the research carried out in Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, North America, Western and Eastern Europe, and Japan. In addition, two contributions delve into the theoretical side of the area, whose authors come from countries as far away as Mexico and Sweden. As far as we can remember, no previous forum or publication specializing in this field has been able to bring together such geographical diversity. Furthermore, of course, we have dedicated this dossier to Professor Emeritus Thomas Daniel Wilson (T.D.Wilson), Ph.D., an international reference in information behavior research and our mentor since the beginning of our studies, who kindly accepted this invitation. Thank you, professor; we are very honored.

First of all, the preface of this special issue has been written by Dr. Judith Sutz, who kindly accepted our request. She has been the Coordinator of the Sectoral Commission of Scientific Research (CSIC) of UdelaR for thirty years, since its foundation and her retirement in December 2022, when she received the title Doctor Honoris Causa from UdelaR. As she describes, the work we are showing today is the sum of the efforts of a group of academics plus the enabling research policies developed during the period in which Dr. Sutz was at the head of the CSIC. From this preface, the dossier is structured in three parts.

The **first part** is titled *Thomas Daniel Wilson: building a pathway in Information Science moving towards creating and accessing inclusive information and knowledge growth*, where his biography is presented in his main stages: childhood and youth (the 1950s and 1960s); University of Sheffield period (1972 - 1980); 1980s and 1990s; 2000s; 2019-2022. The aim is to disseminate his production in different fields of theories and empirical research in Information Behaviour (IB) and to motivate research on his reformulated models through four decades and significant contributions to the development of Information Science in the last 50 years.

The **second part** is focused on the presentation of *User Studies/Information Behaviour research and teaching in Uruguay (1993-2023)* through a review of its main research projects by interdisciplinary teams coordinated by professors María

Cristina Pérez (1992-2015, year of her retirement) and Martha Sabelli (1992 to date).

The title of the **third part** is *Perspectives and overview of research in different regions of the world,* and has two articles about the perspectives and overview. First, Donal O. Case, Professor Emeritus at the School of Communication and Information at the University of Kentucky (USA) and author of the renowned handbook *Looking for Information* (Case & Given, 2016), of which we will soon have a renewed fifth edition available (Given, Case & Wilson, 2023), presents the article entitled *The past and future of Information Behaviour Reseach, Through a Wilsonian Lens*. Second, Professor Naresh Agarwal focuses on *Information Behaviour Research in the twenty–first century: the journey so far.* Agarwal is an Associate Professor and Director of the Information Science & Technology Concentration at the School of Library and Information Science at Simmons University (USA) and former President of the Association for Information Science & Technology. Among his numerous works on IB and knowledge management, we highlight those in the context of IB, a topic that has been the subject of much debate in the field and which Professor Agarwal has masterfully synthesized (Agarwal, 2017).

The following articles focus on IB research in different regions written by leading scholars. First, African research is carried out by Ina Fourie, Professor and Head of the Department and Chair of the School of Information Technology at the University of Pretoria (South Africa). Her article is titled *Information behavior research in Africa: past, potential and a "cry" for impactful research improving daily livelihood and prosperity*. It is followed by the article dedicated to Latin America and the Caribbean by Professor Carlos Alberto Ávila Araujo from the Escola de Ciência da Informação da Universidade Federal de Minas Gerais (UFMG). Professor Araújo, in addition to being a renowned researcher in the fundamentals of LIS (Araújo, 2009) and information practices (Araújo, 2017), is very knowledgeable about research in this geographical area, having held, among other representative positions, the presidency of the *Association for Information Science Education and Research in Iberoamerica and the Caribbean* (EDICIC).

The third article is dedicated to the research conducted in North America by Heidi Julien, Professor of Information Science at the University at Buffalo Graduate School of Education (USA). In addition to her extensive scientific output in the field of IB and information literacy, several works by Professor Julien and collaborators have allowed us to follow trends in user research for almost 30 years, thanks to the publication of a set of longitudinal analyses starting in 1984 (Julien, 1996) and going up to 2013 (Julien & O'Brien, 2014).

The North American research is followed by two papers focusing on European research. The first of these, which reviews research from Western Europe, is written by Aurora González-Teruel. She is an Associate Professor at the University of Valencia (Spain) who works at the Department of History of Science and Documentation. In addition to various works on IB published in international journals, she is the author and co-author of two of the existing manuals in Spanish on the theoretical and methodological foundations of the study of information behavior (González-Teruel, 2005; González-Teruel & Barrios-Cerrejón, 2012). On the other hand, the article dedicated to Eastern Europe is written by Elena Macevičiūtė, a Professor at the Swedish School of Library and Information Science, University of Borås (Sweden). Professor Macevičiūtė's research is extensive, some of it in collaboration with Professor Tom Wilson, and has been carried out, among others, in the field of organisational information and communication (Macevičiūtė & Wilson, 2002) and digital inequalities (Macevičiūtė & Wilson, 2018). To conclude the part dedicated to IB research in different geographical areas, Mamiko Matsubayashi and Yukiko Sakai present an article dedicated to Japanese research. Mamiko Matsubayashi is an Assistant Professor at the Graduate School of Library, Information and Media Studies, University of Tsukuba (Japan) and develops her research on IB from the perspective of social informatics. Yukiko Sakai works at the Shinanomachi Media Center, Keio University (Japan).

The dossier concludes with two articles on theoretical approaches and research by academics, one from Nordic countries and one from Latin America. First, Professor Isto Huvila presents the article entitled *Revisiting metagames and*

metagaming: theoretical and methodological considerations. Professor Huvila holds the chair in information studies at the Department of Archival Studies, Library and Information Studies, and Museums and Cultural Heritage Studies at Uppsala University (Sweden) and is a docent at Åbo Akademi University in Turku (Finland). His research areas are varied and include information and knowledge management and social and participatory information practices, among others, in contexts as varied as archaeology and cultural heritage, archives libraries and museums, and health information and e-health (e.g., Huvila, 2008; Huvila, 2011). Second, Juan José Calva González of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México-UNAM and author of the NEIN model (Calva González, 2004), presents the work entitled *Investigación sobre usuarios de la información: un recorrido desde sus inicios hasta la actualidad en México a partir del Seminario de Investigación sobre Usuarios de la Información*. Dr. Calva-González is the coordinator of the *Seminarios de Investigación sobre Usuarios de la Información* and the *Congreso Internacional de Investigación sobre Usuarios de Información*, one of several international forums on information users in the Latin American context.

Finally, back in Uuguay, regarding teaching through undergraduate and postgraduate student production over the last thirty years, by the lecturer in User Studies (1992-2015) María Cristina Pérez Giffoni: *Conociendo a los usuarios desde el proceso formativo: experiencias de articulación enseñanza-investigación a través de la producción estudiantil 1993-2008*. It is complemented by Martha Sabelli's contribution on the *Producción de trabajos finales de grado y posgrado 2009-2022*.

The dossier closes with a **Posface** written by the editor of Informatio, Professor Dr. Mario Barité.

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