

Students' Self-Reflection and Information Sharing Practices with Pathfinders

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Abstract: This paper describes students pathfinders in elementary schools based on ICT education and school libraries. The aims of this research were to analyze the features of students' pathfinders as they create them and work with them, and the process of making them, while also considering the most suitable format. Most students think in terms of one page (displayed by a search engine) of a unit of website. The item of the pathfinder for students is necessity in describing a method of creating of the keyword. The pathfinder works well for students in retrieving certain types of information

Keywords: Information Retrieval, ICT Literacy, Pathfinder, Web Navigation

1. Introduction

Most school libraries in Japan are NOT Media Centers. Only 77% of all public school teachers were found to have ICT instruction capabilities [1]. And only 7% (elementary school) and 10% (junior high and high school) of teacher librarians can provide instruction on information retrieval via the Internet or CD-ROM [2]. The National Curriculum in Japan [3] prescribes that both the school library and ICT must help the learning activities of the students. Our previous research [4] shows that a guide is needed for retrieval and reflection of retrieval.

The authors focused on the pathfinder as a possible tool for this purpose. It contains sources on information for librarians to strive for and to facilitate. Although pathfinders have traditionally existed as paper handouts, they are becoming increasingly popular in electronic form on most library websites, providing advice on how to find information online [5].

The Purpose of this Research is that a classroom implementation was conducted in which pathfinders children were asked to create pathfinders, and the characteristics of the children's pathfinders were analyzed from the pathfinders they created and the process of creation.

2. Method

Students create the pathfinder as a means to teach and reflect their retrieval methods.

Lesson Theme is "Let's teach your retrieval methods to friends or the next fifth grade students". Target Class is Fifth graders, 32 students. All were accustomed to using the PC, word processing software and search engines on the Internet. Class that was the target of study: Integrated Learning (Literature and Social Studies) Contents of study are in

Literature “Wondering about Words” and in Social Studies “Devices for Fruit and Vegetable Cultivation”. Locations are Classroom, Computer Room, or School Library. Students can choose from these locations according to their needs. Study periods are 11 periods (45minutes/period), Literature for six periods and Social Studies for five periods.

3. Results

A total of 48 pathfinders were created by students. Examples are shown Figure 1. Table 1 show the ratio filled in each category. The Internet is commonly used and the dictionary/encyclopedia are also used. “Books and Other Libraries” showed lower usage figures. There were 31 comments from children. The children put greatest emphasis on the methods of creating keywords. Among entries in the 31 cases, 25 cases (80%) were comments regarding the keyword compilation method our input method.

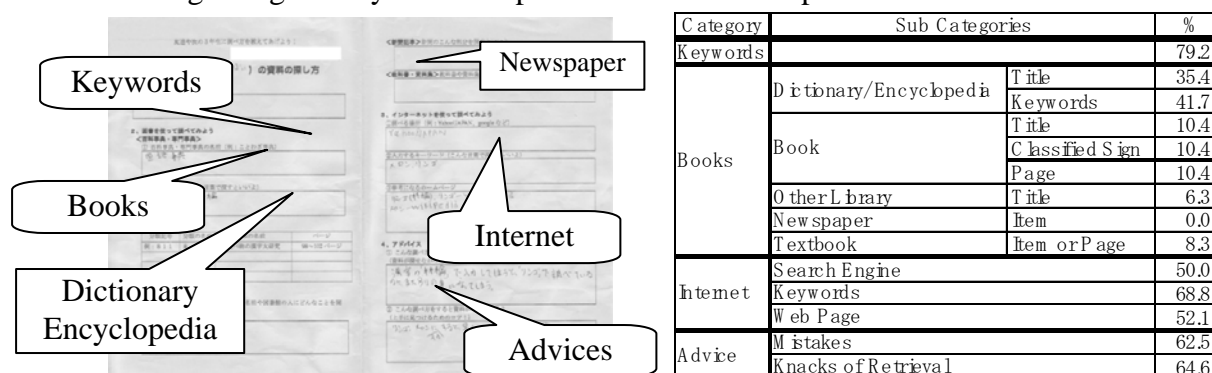


Figure 1: Example of Pathfinder

Table 1 : Fill-in Ratio of Every Categories N=48

4. Conclusion

Students considered the method of creating keywords as the most important aspect. They can regard result by search engine as a single source of information enclosed with single keywords. Conception of keywords is particularly important. Our next researches are that the new format of pathfinder will be defined and that these pathfinders will be shared by students and use for CSCL.

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