EMBODIED INFORMATION PRACTICES

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Embodied Information practices

We will discuss:

• Conceptions of information behaviour
• Conceptions of sense making
• Connections to practice theory

Using two case studies:

• Renal Patients: longitudinal study of online data to examine *how people make sense of kidney failure in online support groups*

• Mud to Museum: ethnographic study of *archaeologists’ information practices during a field excavation*
the totality of human behaviour in relation to sources and channels of information, including both active and passive information seeking and information use. (Wilson 2000, p. 49)
Wilson’s second 1981 model, from Wilson 1999
“The sense-making metaphor” (Dervin 1992)
## Sense making in other disciplines

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discipline</th>
<th># papers</th>
<th>% papers</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LIS</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>44.39%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation Studies</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>19.25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>9.63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Psychology</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>6.95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IT</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5.35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4.81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge Management</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>3.74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>5.88%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>187</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Disciplines in which papers addressing sense making were found.

**Sense making is:**
- **29%** Lens to examine something else
- **71%** Focus of the paper

**Sense making is:**
- **58%** Lens to examine something else
- **42%** Focus of the paper
Faculties involved in sense making

The wider sense making literature examines sense making occurring in:

- The mind
- Emotions (Dervin, Olsson 2010, Kramer 2009…)
- The body (Weick, Dervin, Mills 2002, Soneryd 2004..)
- With and without words
- Individual, social, collective

Participatory sense-making (Colombetti & Torrance, 2009; De Jaegher & Di Paolo, 2007) the enactive relations between organisms making sense.
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2 year study: kidney discussion groups

Participant observation - 2 years in three groups
  o 100 posts / day; archives back to 2005
  o Researcher-member (renal wife)
  o Renal patients / family members
  o Contributors from USA / Australia / UK / Canada / NZ ..

Textual analysis of posts
  o Content analysis of posts from a week in May 2011
Treatment Option: Hemodialysis

What is hemodialysis?
Hemodialysis (also called hemo) is a treatment for kidney failure. It is a way to clean waste and fluid from your blood when your kidneys have stopped working.

How does hemodialysis work?
Hemodialysis uses a machine to clean your blood. During treatment, your blood travels from your body, through the dialysis machine, and back to your body. While it is in the machine, your blood goes through a special filter (called a dialyzer), which removes waste and fluid.

When and where can I do hemodialysis?
- In-center hemodialysis is the most common treatment for kidney failure. This is done at a dialysis center. Most people who do in-center hemodialysis will have three treatments per week, each lasting several hours.

There are many things to think about when choosing a treatment for kidney failure. Discuss your options with your doctor to find the best choice for you.
[...] put needles in ok. venous one hurt a bit [...] but i thought i would leave it and see if it went away. started the pump as usual [...] almost straight away, i felt pressure growing on the inside of my arm, [...] it looked like someone was blowing up a small sausage balloon inside my arm! [...] i sort of freaked out,

(Patient, AustralianDialysisBuddies, July 6)

[...] i have to learn what different pains mean! it's ok to get pain, cos it means in one way that something isn't right [...] 

Same patient, July 12

when i pushed back, got a bit of a swelling and it hurt a bit. so i figured i possibly had put the tip of the needle [right through the vein], so pulled the needle back a little bit, and then there was no probs. [...] 

Same patient, July 28
• Sense making requires repetition, time, experiences

• Single instances of information provision (brochure, explanation) are not enough

• Processes of involvement in which cognition, emotions and actions are situated, entwined and evolving

Mud to Museum

• Understand how archaeologists and curatorial/museum professionals make sense of archaeological artefacts

• Follows the ‘journey’ of artefacts:
  o Archaeological dig
  o Repository
  o Museum
Partners

- Orkney Research Centre for Archaeology, University of the Highlands and Islands
  - Iron Age Cairns Project
  - Ness of Brodgar Neolithic Site
- Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, Cambridge University
- Moundville Archaeological Park and Repository, University of Alabama
Methodology

Pilot Field work consisting of:

• Ethnographic observation at dig sites
• In-field short interviews
• Longer conversational interviews (Seidman) off site
Nature of the Sites

• Academic not commercial
• Field Schools
• Non-literate cultures
  o Iron Age
  o Neolithic
  o Missisippian
• Artefacts and Structures
So what is an Artefact?
Down to Earth
A Deft Touch – A taste for it!
The Nursery Slope
Context & Recording

Context

Multiple methods & technologies

• Photos
• GPS
• Find sheets
Drawing

- Why drawing?
- “Knowing your trench”
- Relationship between thought and action?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information Behaviour</th>
<th>Participatory sense making + practice theory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual</td>
<td>People engage with existing discourses and social practices</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Problem focussed, purposive</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive processes</td>
<td>Cognitive, experiential, affective and embodied processes</td>
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**When and where can I do hemodialysis?**
You can do hemodialysis in the most common outpatient dialysis center. This is where it is dialysis center. Most people who do home hemodialysis will have three treatments per week.
References


