

## FAKE NEWS IN France

### Intervention de Christine de Magny

Monday 3/02/2020

#### HOW TO EVALUATE THE QUALITY OF THE INFORMATION

Hello every one. Welcome

I'm Christine de Magny, I'm the documentalist of the lycée, responsible of the library who's named CDI, Information and Documentation Center. It means that information is important.

In french professional bac, pupils have a documentation class of documentation. I don't have always time to really study fake news with them mais they also have a socio Culturel Education classroom where they study fake news.

In documentation class, they have to learn how to evaluate the quality of information. We have a main theme and objectif who is to realize an exhibition and by this project, learn to make researchs, find and treat the informations, evaluate them, understand them and compare with others type of documents, write a bibliography, write a text adapted to a public and realize some exhibitions panels. With the service aux personnes classroom we make a exhibition about slavery, with showroom assistants in pets ... about links between human and animals and with showroom assistants in food about workers in the 19<sup>e</sup> century.

For learnig how to evaluate the quality of sites or books, magazines, they need to verify 3 points : fiability, credibility and pertinence. Often they told me « It' a question of truth » « It's true or it's not true » and I answer to them : « It's not a question of truth, it's a question of confidence and serious. »

#### What is fiability ?

It's the **confidence** you can have on the article. It means : where did it comes from ? it's like with friends. You have confidence in someone when you know him, when you know its origin, when you know where he comes from. It's the question of the **sources** of the information. Do you find or see an autor, a title, an editor, a date, a web adress ? If yes, you can keep it. If not, « rubbish » ! you can put it in the basket. You cant' keep it.

It's like when you were a child, your mother told you « Don't accept sweets from somebody you don't known, don't follow in the street somebody you don't know ! ».

If you don't know the sources of a document you can't keep it. That's it fiability. At the end, it must be like an alarm which flash in your mind : no sources = danger.

#### What is credibility ?

Another time it's not a question of trust or not. It's a question of **serious**.

Is the information serious ? How can I evaluate the serious ? Findind who is the autor or the responsible group of the informations, who is the site. I have to find and look for these informations :

**who are the competences of the writers** ? Who are they : history teacher, journalist, granny in a blog of cooking ? It's like a little game, like an investigation, I need to question the site, to look after the different mentions « who are we ? » in the site, to discover who is under the worlds.

When I do this I can evaluate like on a scale of quality : at the top the specialists, historians, teachers, after, those who testify, at the end those who write in blogs because I often don't know anything about them.

Be careful the competence is not a question of notoriety. You can have a big notoriety but you're not a specialist. In a few cases you will prefer somebody absolutely unknown but specialist of the subject than somebody very known (as if it's the republic president or a very known singer) because the specialist have the authority to speak about the subject and know it very well, what is not the case of the republic president.

After having looked for the competences of the author, you have to look at the own text : is it well written ? Is it complete ? Is it in a sustained or spoken language ? Is it possible to verify the informations or not ? Have we a subjective or objective text ? Etc...

For evaluating credibility I have to verify these two criterions : the seriousness of the author, the seriousness of the text, it means its contents, the way it is written.

### **And the pertinence.**

**It's the relation between what I'm looking for and the result.** Is the result corresponding to my subject ? If I work about slavery in the cotton fields and that I find a text about coffee fields, of course it's wrong !

In the conclusion, I say to my pupils, these three notions have to become like reflexes when you are making researches. It must be like light switch on or prevent you of a danger if it miss one. If one criterion is not, your document can go to the basket ! Don't keep it.

I explain them like a joke saying : it's like when you receive a gift in a packing or a letter, it's a surprise, you're very happy and the first thing you do is looking at the sender. Oh it's my friend, my sister, my grand mother ! It's the reliability ! The origin, the sources. You can open the gift without risk. If there is no sender, be careful, it can be dangerous. If it's an anonymous letter, packaging, perhaps there is something bad in it, or a danger. Don't open it. Don't keep it.

After, if you know the origin of the gift, you open it without risk and then you look at the quality. Perhaps you look for the mark ! Who had made it ? Where does it come from ? You are looking for the competences ! The credibility For example if it is a very nice pull-over from Christian Dior. It's a sign of quality. It's not coming from the supermarket. And again you can see more the quality : how is the tissue ? Is it hot or not ? It's like when you observe the contents of the text, the grammar....

But it stays one question : the pertinence. It's a little as if we ask the question : this pull-over is it well for me, is it corresponding to what I am looking for? I'm looking at the size and.... My size is XS and the pull XL.... I can't keep it !!! Such a shame !