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Topic: A search term by any other name is just as correct? : The importance of evolving language in keywords and subject headings

Learning objective:

- Students will describe how subject headings differ from keywords in order to recognize the impact language (e.g. subject headings) has on finding relevant articles, particularly in regards to minority populations.

Materials:

- Instructor needs access to internet; helpful if students have computers & internet, too

Activity overview:

(5 minutes) *Think/pair/share activity:* Brainstorm keywords

- Students are asked to brainstorm keywords for the topic “Diagnosing autism spectrum disorders in ethnic minorities”
- As a full class, have students shout out their keywords. Write them on the board in three separate columns (one for each facet of the topic)
- Discuss how to generate more keywords (prepping students to start thinking in terms of how they will search the topic using a database’s thesaurus)

(5 minutes) *Discussion:* where to start looking for resources to write a paper on this topic

(10 minutes) *Demonstration:* Search autism in PsycINFO’s thesaurus in Ovid platform

- Demonstrate searching for autism and explain how mapping to the thesaurus impacts search
- Provide definition of subject headings
- Explain how subject headings will find articles that only use outdated terms (e.g. “Asperger’s”)

(10 minutes) *Discussion:* Search “ethnic minorities” in PsycINFO’s thesaurus in Ovid platform

- Ask students for reactions on related & narrower terms
- Discuss possibilities of how these terms will impact their results differently than using a keyword

(5 minutes) *Activity:* Students perform a search on their own computers (if available) for “diagnosis”

Assessment of student learning:

- Listen to students during class discussion and watch their steps during the last activity.

Framework knowledge practices or dispositions:

- Searching as strategic exploration
 - KP: Understand how information systems (i.e., collections of recorded information) are organized in order to access relevant information
 - KP: Use different types of searching language (e.g., controlled vocabulary, keywords, natural language) appropriately