The impact of student translators' linguistic competence, cultural competence, and Web search expertise on the complexity of search engine query formulation

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With the rapid development of the Internet and a strong reliance on computer and electronic tools in the translation process, more and more translation trainers share the view that technological competence needs to be incorporated in translator education (Gambier, 2009; Gouadec, 2007: 91).

Pym states that translation competence involves "the ability to generate a series of more than one viable target text (TTI, TT2 … TTn) for a pertinent source text (ST) [as well as] the ability to select only one viable TT from this series, quickly and with justified confidence" (Pym, 2003: 489). The use of online resources not only facilitates the choice of *the one viable TT*, but also reduces search time.

The concept of Web searching is usually discussed under a number of different headings such as: information behaviour, information seeking, information search behaviour, information retrieval, and interactive information retrieval (Aula 2005: 5; Wilson, 1999: 263). Electronic tools that translators have at their disposal include among others, search engines, encyclopaedias, translator forums, online language corpora, databases, and collections of parallel texts.

This paper analyses the information search behaviours of a total of 18 undergraduate translation students who enrolled in a three-semester translation course at the Higher Vocational State School in Gorzów Wielkopolski, Poland. The author explores the students' use of Google search engine, with specific foci of complexity of language used to identify field-specific knowledge, terminology, and linguistic information, including context of use, stylistic and grammatical accuracy, and frequency of a given word or collocation. The aim of the study is to correlate variables such as the students' language proficiency, exposure to target language culture, Web search expertise, age, and gender with the complexity of their query formulation.

In a broader context, this paper constitutes a part of an ongoing research project that will examine several aspects of the development of translation competence in a selected group of undergraduate students of translation over a period of two years.

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