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Translating and the Computer
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In the driver's seat

Perceptions of control as
indicators of language
professionals' satisfaction
with technologies in the
workplace

Outline

- Context and situation
- Objectives
- Methodology
- Results
 - Summary
 - Comparison
- Concluding remarks
 - Future work

Context and situation

- Widespread use of language technologies by professionals, e.g.
 - Translation environment tools (TEntTs)
 - Machine translation (MT)
- Two major issues: technological capacity of tools and human willingness to use them
 - Issues of choice and control
 - e.g. Kay (1980/1997)

Context and situation (2)

- Studies of use of and reactions to technologies
 - **Surveys** (e.g. LISA 2002, 2004; Wheatley 2003; Lagoudaki 2006, Bowker and Marshman 2010, Taravella 2011)
 - **Eye-tracking** (e.g. O'Brien 2006)
 - **Screen recording** (e.g. Massey and Ehrensberg 2009)
 - **Mailing lists** (e.g. Garcia 2006)
 - **Discussion forums** (e.g. McBride 2009)
 - **Case studies** (e.g. Taravella & Villeneuve (2011)
 - **Shadowing** and **interviews** (e.g. LeBlanc 2012)

Hypotheses

- Perceptions of control over work and working environment play a role in professionals' attitudes towards technologies
- Perceptions of effect on control may be either positive or negative depending on individuals' personal experience and situation
- Understanding perceptions of control can help us to understand how to better integrate technologies into different kinds of work and working environments

Objectives

- Survey technology users in order to...
 - Evaluate perceptions of control over work and environment, including type and intensity of perceptions and reasons for them
 - Investigate whether these play a role in attitudes towards technologies
 - Search for correlations between individual characteristics and working environment and perceptions

Methodology

- Anonymous online survey (English and French)
 - Distribution e.g. via mailing lists, newsletters, web sites, discussion boards, professional contacts
- Demographic profile
 - Primary occupation
 - Type of employment
 - Years of experience
 - Collaboration and number of collaborators

Methodology (2)

- Perceptions and attitudes
 - Does the use of technologies affect your control over...?
 - Amount of work done
 - Types of tasks performed
 - Quality of work done
 - Working methods
 - Relations with clients/employers
 - Remuneration for work

Methodology (2)

- Perceptions and attitudes
 - If so, do you feel
 - Much/somewhat more in control
 - Much/somewhat less in control
- Overall reactions
 - Do you think technologies are overall assets or drawbacks for professionals?
 - Which factors play a role in this evaluation?

Results: Summary

- Responses: 255, 177 complete
 - 61% translators
 - 58% freelancers
 - 73% with 10 or more years of experience
 - 69% have collaborated using technologies
 - More than 85% currently use technologies

Results: Overall perceptions

Overall strongly positive perceptions, relatively consistent across sub-groups

				Strongly agree	Disagree
Total	177	76%	17%	6%	1%
Translators	111	73%	20%	6%	1%
Others	55	82%	12%	5%	2%
≥ 5 y	26	88%	8%	4%	0%
6 yr ≤	158	75%	18%		
Freelance	101	74%	18%		
Salaried	51	80%	14%		
Collaborators	83	83%	11%	7%	0%
Independent	92	67%	24%	6%	2%

Approaching
significance
 $\chi^2 p = 0.057$

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Effect on control over amount of work done

Largely stable results: 2/3 perceive effect; 3/4 perceive increased control

	Y	N	DK
Total	69%	18%	14%
Translators	69%	17%	14%
Others	68%	20%	12%
≤ 5 yr	67%	19%	15%
6+ yr	69%	17%	14%
Freelance	69%	15%	16%
Salaried	71%	21%	9%
Collaborators	73%	17%	11%
Independent	60%	24%	16%

More	Less
77%	23%
73%	27%
83%	17%
76%	24%
76%	24%
76%	24%
74%	26%
78%	22%
72%	28%

Effect on control over tasks performed

Largely stable results: 1/2 perceive effect; 2/3 perceive increased control

	Y	N	DK
Total	51%	31%	18%
Translators	47%	34%	19%
Others	57%	28%	15%
≤ 5 y	46%	31%	23%
6+ yr	51%	31%	18%
Freelance	45%	33%	22%
Salaried	56%	35%	9%
Collaborators	56%	31%	14%
Independent	45%	37%	18%

More	Less
67%	33%
64%	36%
70%	30%
75%	25%
66%	34%
65%	35%
70%	30%
64%	36%
65%	35%

Effect on control over working methods

Largely stable results: 2/3 perceive effect;
2/3 perceive increased control

	Y	N	DK
Total	69%	22%	9%
Translators	66%	26%	9%
Others	76%	15%	9%
≤ 5 y	69%	19%	12%
6+ yr	69%	22%	9%
Freelance	65%	25%	10%
Salaried	72%	21%	8%
Collaborators	71%	20%	9%
Independent	67%	26%	7%

More	Less
61%	39%
63%	37%
58%	42%
72%	28%
59%	41%
64%	36%
65%	35%
58%	42%
64%	36%

Effect on control over quality of work

Some variation in results: 4/5 perceive effect; almost 3/4 perceive increased control

	Y	N	DK	More	Less
Total	83%	13%	4%	73%	27%
Translators	86%	12%	3%	71%	29%
Others	77%	15%	7%	77%	23%
≤ 5 y	81%	15%	4%	73%	24%
6+ yr	83%	12%	5%	73%	27%
Freelance	81%	14%	5%	73%	27%
Salaried	81%	15%	4%	73%	30%
Collaborators	89%	8%	2%	73%	27%
Independent	76%	19%	5%	73%	27%

Approaching significance

$X^2 p = 0.054$
(2 df, N = 178)

Effect on control over employer/client relations

Considerable variation in results

	Y	N	DK
Total			
Translators			
Others	46%		
≤ 5 y	46%	27%	27%
6+ yr	48%	33%	18%
Freelance	51%	36%	13%
Salaried	41%	37%	22%
Collaborators	58%	28%	14%
Independent	37%	41%	22%

Significant
X² p<0.05
(1, N = 85)

Significant
X² p<0.05
(2 df, N = 177)

Significant
X² p<0.05
(2 df, N = 176)

Effect on control over remuneration

Considerable variation in results

	Y	N	DK
Total	51%	30%	20%
Translators	62%	27%	12%
Others	31%	35%	34%
≤ 5 y	23%	46%	31%
6+ yr	55%	27%	18%
Freelance	64%	25%	11%
Salaried	29%	41%	29%
Collaborators	56%	25%	19%
Independent	46%	36%	18%

	42%	58%
	60%	40%
	50%	50%
	39%	61%

Significant

$X^2 p < 0.001$
(2 df, N = 177)

Significant

$X^2 p < 0.05$
(2 df, N = 177)

Significant

$X^2 p < 0.01$
(6 df, N = 176)

Factors influencing overall evaluation

Considerable variation, but more positive effects outweigh more negative, contentious points

	Total	Amount	Tasks	Quality	Methods	Relations	Remuneration
Translators	111	67%	42%	82%	57%	26%	37%
Non-translators	65	68%	49%	85%	71%	35%	26%
0-5 years' experience	26	81%	42%	81%	62%	35%	15%
6+ years' experience	150	65%	45%	83%	62%	29%	36%
Freelancers	101	63%	46%	84%	58%	30%	39%
Salaried workers	51	75%	51%	80%	69%	31%	25%
Resource-sharers	92	70%	48%	90%	76%	34%	38%
Non-sharers of resources	83	64%	42%	75%	47%	27%	29%

Concluding remarks(1)

- Overall positive perceptions of technologies
 - Effect on amount of work done, tasks, working methods
 - Somewhat less in client/employer relationships, remuneration
- Variation between groups (e.g. translators and others, collaborators and non-collaborators, freelancers and salaried professionals) nevertheless observed, particularly in latter areas

Concluding remarks (2)

- Variation in both perception and nature of technologies' effects on control
 - Largely surrounding human rather than technological, objective factors
- Need to be aware of and deal with issues, especially those concerning some specific groups, e.g. experienced freelance translators

Future work

- In-depth investigation of reasons for observed reactions
- Further analysis of correlations, associations of factors studied
- Examination of other factors influencing perceptions of technologies
- Gathering of information from non-users of technologies

Thanks!

- Any questions?
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