Anything.hu: Understanding evaluation standards for online resources in Hungarian Studies

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Teaching and learning a second or foreign language (L2) have never been easier than in the age of the Internet. Online resources available for Hungarian Studies include educational, government, commercial, and personal web sites as well as scholarly resources provided by subscription journals, indexes, and databases. Searching and evaluating information in the electronic environment may be challenging in one's first language (L1). Second language information-seeking causes even more difficulties and may render language learners susceptible to misconstruing details. Inability to assess suitability or to separate facts from fiction, erroneous or personalized interpretations; reliance on types of resources based on experience in L1; altered levels of intuition and gullibility must be constant considerations in a second language learning setting.

Information-seeking behavior of English as a Second Language (ESL) students is usually discussed within the scope of Human Information Behavior in Library and Information Science (LIS). ESL students' use of the Internet is well documented. However, an area yet to be explored is native speakers of other languages searching in a second language, including Hungarian. Learning in an electronic environment influences language acquisition, learning styles and teaching methods, while it also tempts students to take morally questionable shortcuts. From a more practical aspect of L2 learning, both students and instructors face

1. With regard to ESL students, Stapleton & Helms-Park (2006) gave a brief review of the history of Web-based research in L1 and L2 undergraduate contexts, concluding that this new medium of communication generally requires vigilance on the part of the reader.

Une nation vivant dans sa langue
some questions daily. Should we use Google at all? When searching for information on a particular topic, should we use Wikipedia at all, and in what language? Is the quality of the entries at the same level? Should we allow our students to use L1 sources or should we require citing only L2 sources? Should we encourage students to gain valuable experience in searching in L2 while ignoring potentially relevant sources in L1? Are searching skills transferable from one language to another? How can we decide whether we can trust XYZ web site? How do I direct my students to find pertinent information from a trustworthy source? The answers are not always straightforward and there is no single, comprehensive and unambiguous solution. Despite the numerous information literacy tutorials and subject research guides, insufficient guidance is obtainable on the Internet or in the scholarly literature on the handling of information in another language.

The importance of evaluation

With its rapidly growing and freely accessible information, the World Wide Web has become the first and sometimes sole source of information. A variety of online tools (e.g., search engines, directories, online translators and dictionaries) as well the most recent Web 2.0 applications (e.g., social networking sites, blogs, wikis, social bookmarking and tagging, document and photo sharing, and online communities, etc.) provide a wealth of information and encourage fundamentally different methods of information retrieval. Another exciting topic yet to be investigated is the role of these tools and applications in shaping a particular language.

The reliability of Internet resources and the dimensions of databases have been extensively studied, including the evaluation of electronic resources.\(^2\) Although a study of 543 American college students found

ease of availability and use to be more important than format, students have been reported to favor electronic resources over print (Burton & Chadwick, 2000). Research has substantiated instructors’ and librarians’ observations and anecdotal evidence that the World Wide Web is the first information resource for students, and Google is the initial step. A research study from Colorado State University reports that 58 percent of college freshmen used Google or another search engine as the first resource for their course papers, while only 23 percent turned to a second resource, such as a database or library catalog (Lippincott, 2005). Students rely on publicly-available electronic resources very frequently, with many using these exclusively (Matthews & Wiggins, 2001). A recent initiative, Google Scholar, contributes appreciably to the presence of quality resources on the World Wide Web. It is a significant development toward storing high-quality information where users are actually searching. However, instructors and librarians have continued to express concerns about students’ evaluation skills.

New L2 learners and informal communities on the Web

From the language learners’ perspective, current college students belong to the Net Generation, with a distinguishable array of characteristics, learning styles, technological and searching skills. These learners have grown up with Internet resources a click away and have become accustomed to using technology as a learning tool. Their technology skills are highly developed, and they are also accustomed to quick and instant solutions. In general, the challenge for all educators is to set up a learning environment of the present for the learners of the future, regardless of the subject.

3 For more on the topic, Educating the Net Generation, eds. Diana Oblinger and James Oblinger, is an excellent resource on the Net Generation, including their learning styles, learning expectations, and technology skills. Available for the public in an e-book format at http://net.educause.edu/ir/library/pdf/pub7101.pdf
One of the most significant effects of Web 2.0 is the formation of informal online communities. Social networking applications such as the International Who’s Who (IWiW), based in Hungary, are similar in function and use to their international equivalents. The most widely used — including MySpace, a professional networking and referral site called LinkedIn, or Facebook favored by high school and college students — have created online communities across borders, cultures, and languages. Many of them serve as portals for their users, and providing an exclusive means of communication and information-seeking.

New types of information resources

Prior to Web 2.0 applications, earlier popular communication methods such as Internet Relay Chat (IRC), bulletin boards, discussion forums, and newsletters already represented uncensored and uncontrolled information resources. With its numerous acronyms, abbreviations, and poor spelling and language choices, the impact of online communication on the use of any language is tangible, including the Hungarian language (Hajnal Ward & Agocs, 2004). More recently, instant and text messaging seem to exert a major influence on languages.

The types of resources these new information communities create allow users to edit pages, add information, and upload data while expressing personal opinions and providing unsubstantiated information. English-language commercial pages include the Internet Movie Database (imdb.com), the most important resource for data on motion pictures, or Amazon (amazon.com), an online book vendor providing the opportunity for their visitors to voice their opinions, rate publications and services, and add reviews.

Subject-specific discussion forums, online support groups, professional and personal blogs, and wikis represent another type of community. In these instances, everyone is equally entitled to contribute, regardless of

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4. Some other popular Hungarian social networking sites include: baratikor.hu, osztalytarsam.hu, network.hu
credentials, content knowledge, style, or manners. As noted above, the impact of informal communities on the language is an untapped area, and generates new challenges for learners of a particular language, and consequently for the instructor.

The most frequented information source nowadays, Wikipedia (wikipedia.org) can serve as an example of a community-edited source with great impact on information. A wiki, from the Hawaiian word “swift” is a web site that encourages collaboration from many different authors. The page allows visitors to organize, add, remove, and edit the available content. Launched in 2001, Wikipedia, the world largest collaborative online encyclopedia (presently with over 2.5 million entries in English), has been constantly growing and expanding into other languages, including Hungarian. New additions, such as Wikimedia, a repository of media files, are also evolving. Wikipedia is said to be the least reliable source by many of its evaluators, while others, by contrast, consider it the most thoroughly edited and most trustworthy resource due to its audience of editors / readers. As regards quality of information resources, “Wikipedia has become a lightning rod for debates about quality” (Notess, 2006, p. 47).

A recent initiative called Metapedia aims to provide an unconventional source of information in an alternative encyclopedia. Topics cover areas outside mainstream encyclopedias, with a “metapolitical purpose to influence the mainstream debate, culture and historical view.” The Hungarian version was launched in December, 2007 at hu.metapedia.org, with an explicitly “national” agenda.

Online resources for L2 learners

L2 learners have a choice of using two types of online learning resources. First, teaching materials designed primarily for this purpose have been growing in number and improving in quality. While in

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1999 only three sites could be found to learn Hungarian, there is an abundance of resources ranging from proprietary Hungarian language learning materials, such as Digiclass@Rutgers for their students only, to publicly-accessible sites, such as magyarora.hu, bbi.hu, kaleidovox.hu, magyar-iskola.hu, or magyarultanulok.com. These sources are usually developed by professional language instructors, although some of them may also allow users to create community resources. Texts on these sites are tailored to a specific level of language proficiency, i.e., generally written or edited by bilingual speakers to assure quality of language and information. The evaluation of these resources is beyond the scope of the present paper.

The second type of online learning resource contains freely-accessible web sites created and maintained by a variety of providers. This paper intends to target users of Hungarian-language sites of the second type (Table 1). In addition to educating L2 learners in general about how the Web works, the following typology of Hungarian language resource, based on a study with ESL students (Stapleton et al., 2006), may serve as a sufficient starting point for evaluation in any L2 in the online learning environment. The list is far from exhaustive, and serves only to offer ideas for further classification and to match assignments with types of sites in advance.

Table 1. Types of Hungarian web sites on the public Web

1. News sites
   a. Sources of news (e.g., daily newspapers or weekly magazines that also appeared in print, or online news outlets with similar coverage of current events): nepszabadsag.hu, hvg.hu, magyarnarancs.hu

6 Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey launched an online language learning initiative in 2000, utilizing Hungarian. It has since been discontinued due to the varying commitments of different language instructors, the potential developers of the pages. For more on the project, see Hajnal Ward (2005).

7 For a more detailed description, please read Monika Szirmai's paper in this volume.
b. Opinions and editorials on news-related issues in the same publications as above

c. Alternative news sites (often online only and slightly biased, the URL might be a telltale sign), e.g., nemzetihirhalo.hu, ma.hu, maghar.gportal.hu, hunhir.hu, althir.hu

2. Academic or scholarly sites (written by academics or aspiring academics on topics requiring research and professional expertise; compiled by experts with LIS experience with expert assistance, such as in digital libraries)

a. University and university departmental web sites, e.g., at elte.hu, pte.hu, unideb.hu, etc.

b. Scientific and scholarly organizations, e.g., Hungarian Academy of Science at mta.hu, with its organizations, such as the Society of Hungarian Linguistics at mnyt.hu. Portals with more links: mta.lap.hu, doki.net, etc.


3. Interest groups: sites with identifiable political, religious, ideological, or information-distribution agendas

a. Web sites of parties and other political organizations: acronym_of_party_name.hu

b. Religious sites: reformatus.hu, katolikus.hu, baptist.hu, sofar.hu, zsido.hu, mazsihisz.org, etc.

c. Sites of alternative organizations: magyarharcos.hu, kecsege.hu, arpadsavos.hu, nemzetifront.hu, etc.

d. Explicitly racist sites: kuruc.info, gojmotorosok.hu, nemnemsoha.hu, mindentvissza.uw.hu, etc.

4. Entertainment sites

a. Music sites maintained by either music groups or individuals, without commercial interest: allmusic.hu, zene.hu, mymusic.hu, brody mediastorm.hu, etc.
b. Fashion and entertainment online magazines: divatlap.hu, hazaidivat.hu, velvet.hu, etc.
c. Gaming sites: anyomozo.hu, gameskut.hu, ingyenjatek.hu, jatekwebclub.hu, hosemer.hu, beholder.hu, etc.
d. Fun sites, including humor: vicclap.hu, gatveder.hu, gumicsizma.hu

e. Adult entertainment sites: any_adult_content.hu

5. Personal sites: Written by individuals without stated credentials or institutional affiliations
   a. Topic in the area of expertise (e.g., a linguist writing about linguistic topics)
   b. Topic outside the area of expertise (e.g., a linguist writing about heart rate monitor training for long distance runners)

6. Commercial sites: those with primarily pecuniary interests
   a. Sites of Hungarian companies: otpbank.hu, polgaritksz.hu, borsodi.hu, beres.hu, zsolnay.hu, etc.
   b. Sites of multinational companies in Hungary, usually company_name.hu or company_name.com/hu

7. Government and related web sites
   a. Sites maintained by the national government, e.g., the Prime Minister’s Office: gov.meh.hu, ministries: okm.gov.hu, im.hu, eum.hu, honvedelem.hu, etc.
   b. Local government sites such as those of counties, towns, districts, and villages, e.g., jozsefvaros.hu, zuglo.hu, baranya.hu, hbmo.hu, debrecen.hu, etc.
   c. International sites, including translated content, e.g., unicef.hu, Hungarian Fulbright Commission’s web site: fullbright.hu, Hungarian UN Association: menszt.hu

8. Searchable sites
   a. Portals such as startlap.hu, sport.lap.hu, magyarirodalom.lap.hu (alphabetical catalog available at startlap.hu). Hungarian language specific site: magyarnyelv.lap.hu (expert help is needed to evaluate resources)
b. Modified Google search engine (i.e. search narrowed down to Hungarian language or sites ending in .hu)

Special evaluation in L2 needed

In a study of 786 undergraduate and graduate students across 25 departments focusing on English for Academic Purposes (EAP) at a British university, Slaouti (2002) highlighted the need for critical Internet literacy while also emphasizing the importance of evaluation. A need for more critical thinking when using Web resources is explicitly recommended by many authors from a variety of fields. Few empirical studies have focused on how the World Wide Web may be affecting L2 learners who have to choose, explore, and evaluate information resources in the electronic learning environment, including a plethora of subtleties of online texts.

The need for a deeper critical awareness of the quality electronic source from the perspective of L2 acquisition is underscored by the fact that foreign languages have become a major tool for both communication and information discovery in fields other than literary criticism or linguistics, including business, science, medicine, etc. Globalization has resulted in a job market with an unprecedented need for employees proficient in multiple foreign languages, and higher education has been trying to catch up with the demands. As an example, at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, students in the Hungarian minor program major in a wide variety of fields, hoping to find positions in business, computer science, health, or life sciences research.

A Hungarian language program outside the country may not be well supported by the host university library, and the small reference library the Hungarian language instructor maintains would probably fail to satisfy the needs of learners of Hungarian for special purposes. The University Libraries at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey owns a decent print collection of Hungarian titles. Students are also welcome to use the print resources of the affiliated Library and Archives of the
American Hungarian Foundation, the largest organization in North America to document the traditions and contributions of the American Hungarians. On average, however, only one or two students in twenty used print resources. The rest insisted on relying on the scarce Internet resources available at that time for their projects and presentations in Hungarian or about a Hungarian topic. For all the links on the course web site to quality resources, the instructor often had to face one-sided presentations and read “research” papers completely beside the point in a variety of topics in Hungarian Studies.

Evaluating in a non-native language: The Hungarian example

There has been no consensus on the evaluation of electronic resources. Current evaluation models range from content-based to technology-driven assessment. They usually consist of checklists with criteria that may or may not be appropriate for assessing content in a second language. Some popular evaluation checklists include some or all of the following criteria: access; authority; comparability; content; continuity; coverage; credibility; currency; date; design; language and conventions; multimedia; navigation; presentation; publisher; purpose; reliability; usability; user experience and so forth. The format can vary from simple questionnaires to more complex survey instruments with quantifiable and non-quantifiable approaches. When trying to interpret and translate them into Hungarian, most evaluation models sounded like Twenty Questions, and did not make too much sense in the context of second-language acquisition either.

Considering the example of literature, the appearance of quality Hungarian sites ranges from simple plain text to pages overloaded with the latest web design technologies. A Google search for online texts written by Hungarian authors for a poetry class may result in the critical edition of the authors’ texts on the functional but plain-looking sites of

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8. Data based on author’s eight-semester service as Visiting Professor of Hungarian Studies at Rutgers University, USA from 1999-2003.
the Hungarian Electronic Library (mek.oszk.hu). However, random, unedited or inaccurate versions of the same texts may also turn up on sites loaded with Flash applications.

**Barriers to evaluation in L2**

General web resource evaluation criteria, including checklists, are meant to assess electronic resources in an L1 context. Reading texts in a foreign language will be accompanied by further difficulties in evaluating quality. Obviously, language proficiency plays an important role, and so does the culturally-different perception of facts and authority. In addition to language barriers, one has to identify and possibly overcome the cultural barriers of the target culture and of one's own.

Unlike resources in English, there seems to be a lot more free information available in Hungarian from reliable sources, allowing a course web site in a course management system (CMS)\(^9\) or a digital library to conveniently serve as a gateway for filtering information. However, there are barriers to consider.

The most common obstacle that comes to mind, if L2 is not English, is exemplified by sites created and hosted outside the United States. Most Hungarian URLs end in .hu, which yields an indiscriminate way of searching the Web for information in Hungarian. Regarding Hungarian pages from the perspective of an international searcher who is used to excluding domains by their names, the convenient orientation of the well-known URL extensions, such as edu, com, org, is missing.\(^{10}\) The lack of this primary point of reference alone may often result in using sources with low-quality language or content, unacceptable in an academic setting.

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9. Course Management Systems are online systems designed to support and manage online learning environments in academic settings, such as WebCT, Blackboard, Ecollege, and Moodle.

10. It should be noted that many personal pages posted on the American .edu or British .ac domain may include unedited texts posted by individuals using a university's Web space, and may be misinterpreted as academic research.
Language barriers: The text and the L2 student

From a linguistic perspective, the text itself presents the first difficulty. The accurate interpretation of style, register, and objectivity of a text in a foreign language requires a fairly high level of language proficiency. A specific individual’s language proficiency may also vary in terms of the four skills, reading, writing, speaking, and listening. An authentic text in a foreign language is supposed to be an authoritative source of language use, but it is hard to assess with uneven proficiency. Heritage learners, i.e., learners exposed to a foreign language at home but lacking formal education in that language, demonstrate strong receptive proficiency, but their other skills seem inconsistent.

For instance, the development of reading skills in L1 strongly influences understanding and evaluation. As an example of heritage learners, American Hungarian children were taught to read in English first. As a result, they usually “read” the image of the word, i.e., identify them with a known vocal equivalent. By contrast, Hungarian, an agglutinative language, is traditionally taught by syllabic reading, i.e., equally sounding each syllable such as Jó-na-pot-ki-vá-nok. A quick look at an assortment of letters in Hungarian may not easily result in identifying the word immediately with the one known from the spoken language and with its subtle meaning. As Susanna Rich, the American-Hungarian bilingual author writes about her Fulbright fellowship in Hungary:

I am used to identifying English words as discrete units—as well as in French, in which I am vastly less proficient than Hungarian. But Hungarian words are like mini-sentences. To read Hungarian as I do English would be like identifying whole English sentences on sight. While I was reading signs in Hungary I performed acts of back-and-forth recursive negotiations of the meanings of previous word chunks before the aha of oh-that’s-what-it-means. Meanwhile, the trolley would have left, the light changed, and I’d have to wait to get the next word or the next trolley (Rich, 2008, p.15).

Adding the component of the unfamiliarity with the topic, the obvious language barriers will be complemented by the initial difficulties
with any new subject matter. To mention another example from the Rutgers Hungarian Program, American college students in the Hungarian poetry course had never studied poetry, let alone prosody, prior to the enrollment in the Hungarian Program. Reading authentic texts in Hungarian, i.e., poems of Hungarian poets from the past 300 years, meant a great challenge in terms of deciphering the meaning of the words as well as comprehending content. However, even students with the highest level of proficiency failed to grasp prosody at the beginning, given the fact that they associated the phrase dactylic hexameter with criminal justice rather than with poetry.

Advanced language proficiency and linguistic skills are not necessarily tied to a developed cultural competence. Some scholars assume that it may not even be a possible objective in the case of non-native speakers. Language learners may also be hindered from discerning more succinct features of a text on Web pages driven by political, commercial, or ideological agendas. Non-profit or for-profit organizations may inadvertently or deliberately mislead readers under the assumption of serving the public. Reading in a foreign language also means reading based upon one’s own cultural and education background. The perceptions of authority also vary from culture to culture, as do incorrect judgments of ideological or religious bias (Stapleton & Helms-Park, 2006).

Finally, motivation or task engagement is key in foreign language acquisition, but it may end up turning into a double-edged sword, resulting in a shocking creativity in locating resources with questionable outcomes. The principle of least effort, often exercised by students under pressure, should not be ignored when it comes to finding the easiest and quickest way to accomplish a task.

Cultural perspectives in evaluation in L2

Cross-cultural and cross-language information-seeking behavior in the online environment is one of the most exciting topics of this century. There has been some research about the effect of cultural norms on
information seeking in selected languages; however, a comparative study with multiple source and target languages has yet to be completed. Based on personal experience with English learners of Hungarian, cultural differences in perceiving authority or recognizing facts are only a small subset of the main issues. Contingent on familial ties to Hungary, American Hungarian heritage learners face an indecipherable cultural gap between the homeland and the new country’s Hungarian culture as well.

The most striking barrier for learners of Hungarian in the United States can be rationalized by the difference E.T. Hall delineates in defining high- versus low-context culture. Speakers growing up in a low-context culture, i.e., in the United States, are used to safely accepting texts at face value. However, those growing up with a low-context native language face tremendous challenges in conquering high-context information. As an added complication, Hungarians read (and expect others to read) in a special way: they read between the lines, based on the Communist tradition that what was said in the news, was never the truth or whole truth. Instead, Hungarians got used to inferring that either the opposite was true, or simply made up the missing information. Many non-Hungarians find Hungarian writings elliptical and oblique for the very same reasons, albeit perfectly clear for the native speaker.

About authority in a cross-cultural context

In articles discussing the evaluation of Internet information, authority is often listed as one of the major criteria. There is a significant cultural difference in the approaches to authority, often ascribed at least partially through institutional or organizational affiliation. An early study of information quality and authority on the World Wide Web found that organizational affiliation was one of the most important factors used by faculty members and graduate students in ascribing authority to information (Rieh & Belkin, 1998). In terms of evaluation of electronic information, ascribing proper amounts of cognitive authority is the
focal point, as defined by Patrick Wilson (1983) in his seminal work in social epistemology. Wilson differentiates among three different basic types of authority: cognitive (influence on thoughts), administrative (influence on actions), and institutional authority (influence derived from institutional affiliation).\textsuperscript{11}

Authority in the matters of languages is clarified by Miklos Kontra, a Hungarian scholar in sociolinguistics scrutinizing the population with an opinion on Hungarian language issues in public forums (Table 2).

Table 2. People expressing opinion on Hungarian language issues

(1) Laymen without a degree in linguistics. These are scholars who are well-established in their own fields, but possessing virtually the same knowledge about linguistics as the previous group.

(2) Linguists with expertise in some areas of linguistics. They may or may not have expertise in a particular linguistic issue, depending on whether they research the issue or not.

(3a) If they do not research the area, their viewpoint, from the source evaluation perspective is not any better than those of the previously-described two groups. However, their view is a lot more dangerous, since non-linguists tend to accept the linguist’s opinion regardless.

\textsuperscript{11} Wilson’s definition of cognitive authority is: “Cognitive authority is influence on one’s thoughts that one would consciously recognize as proper.” Cognitive authority is related to credibility, which has two main components: competence and trustworthiness.
(3b) If a linguist with the proper educational background does research the subject, his opinion is most likely corroborated by scholarly research.\(^{12}\)

Evaluation revisited

Critical evaluation of online resources is generally considered one of the most important components of digital literacy. The Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL) in the United States updated the Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education in 2000. According to the ACRL document, an information-literate individual is able to

- Determine the extent of information needed
- Access the needed information effectively and efficiently
- Evaluate information and its sources critically
- Incorporate selected information into one’s knowledge base
- Use information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose

\(^{12}\) The original text in Hungarian is as follows. Translation by J.H Ward.

A nyelvi kérdésekhez nyilvános fórumon hozzászólókat szakértelmelem tekintetében a következő csoportokra lehet osztani:

1. Laikusok, akiknek nincs egyetemi diplomájuk nyelvészetből. Olyan tudósok, akik saját szakterületükön híresek, de nyelvészeti képzettségük gyakorlatilag azonos a laikusokéval (vagyis nem létezik).


3a) Ha nem kutatják, akkor véleményük lényegében nem különbözik a laikusokétól, csak sokkal veszélyesebb, mert a nem-nyelvészek hajlamosak „nyelvtudományi szempontból helyesnek” tekinteni a nyelvész véleményét.

3b) Ha egy képzett nyelvész kutatja is azt a problémát, ami épp érdekli a közvéleményt, akkor véleménye nagy valószínűséggel tudományosan is alátámasztható.
- Understand the economic, legal, and social issues surrounding the use of information, and access and use information ethically and legally\(^{13}\).

The implications point beyond the language class. Information literacy, defined as "an intellectual framework for understanding, finding, evaluating, and using information—activities which may be accomplished in part by fluency with information technology, in part by sound investigative methods, but most important, through critical discernment and reasoning. Information literacy initiates, sustains, and extends lifelong learning through abilities which may use technologies but are ultimately independent of them" (ACRL, 2000).

A checklist for L2 Web users

One of the methods that seems appropriate to serve as a basis for a “localized” version to evaluate Hungarian text is the Website Acceptability Tiered Checklist (WATCH), a multi-trait scale that could be used by instructors and students to assess the quality of web sites (Stapleton & Helms-Park, 2006). The authors experimented with the instrument in a Humanities program by creating a scale to evaluate the suitability of 84 Web-based sources selected by first-year English for Academic Purposes (EAP) students to support their points in a research-based argumentative essay.

The scale includes bands for assessing:
(i) authority and reputation of the author(s)
(ii) accuracy and objectivity of the contents
(iii) evidence of academic rigor in the text, and
(iv) the currency and maintenance of the site as well as the clarity of bibliographical information

\(^{13}\) The full text of Information Literacy Competency Standards for Higher Education is available at http://www.ala.org/ala/acrl/acrlstandards/informationliteracycompetency.cfm
The application of the four-tier gradations within each of the four bands was based on norms of academic citation in the literature on Web sources. Sources rated in the bottom two tiers in any band generally needed to be re-examined carefully. This promising tool is fairly easy to use, with preliminary results revealing that the print and electronic sources used by the participants represented two almost mutually exclusive sets. The tool can be strongly recommended for consideration, since it can be easily translated and tailored to the needs of the L2 students in a particular setting.

Evaluation in context

Based on a contextual approach, an evaluation model (Meola, 2004) has implications for L2 learners. Contrary to checklists, texts are assessed from a larger perspective, and the use of the information is analyzed from an angle external to the site. In checklist assessment, most evaluation models examine the content of a site based on internal, i.e., text-based features (who wrote it, when, and why). The contextual model also analyzes content in the text but from a broader perspective, allowing for evaluation within its social context. The result is a better judgment of information quality.

The contextual approach uses the following three techniques:
1. Promotion and explanation of reviewed resources
2. Comparison
3. Corroboration

By promoting and explaining resources, the focus is on the collaboration of the librarian to promote selected quality material and on the instructor to require that those resources be used in the assignment. Course management systems, portals, and digital libraries have made it feasible to endorse resources of intrinsically higher quality, saving considerable time for students as well.

14. The full instrument can be found in Appendix A. of Stapleton & Helms-Park, 2006, p. 453-454.
Comparison is the examination of similarities and differences in the content of two or more free Web sites to each other. Another example would be comparing the electronic content to other information formats such as newspaper or magazine articles, peer-reviewed journal articles, or scholarly books. Comparison as an evaluative method is useful for obtaining a better understanding of a topic, its depth and controversies. By means of increasing the points of reference; it also helps to reveal more subtle features, such as bias or sarcasm in a particular text.

Corroboration is a technique used in situations in which the truth of information is crucial and in dispute, such as in journalism, witness testimony, and intelligence work. Corroboration of information requires verification against one or more different sources.

This method seems to work for L2 users for several reasons. In addition to previous knowledge, other electronic and print resources in L2, corroboration and comparison can be expanded into the other language too if we want to create new knowledge by means of critical thinking. Unfamiliar topics can be explored in L1 and L2, from both cultures, enhancing comprehension of a topic, and potentially adding value to the language class. This method has invaluable implications in working with Hungarian texts in any type of material from Table 1.

Language and style in Hungarian resources

A common feature of many evaluation instruments is the language component, generally referring to flawless spelling and punctuation, accurate grammar, and style appropriate to the target audience and register. There seems to be a consensus on language quality as a prerequisite for quality content. It is claimed that authors ignoring the quality of the language will not pay attention to accuracy in other aspects. It should be noted that the widely-available spell check function eliminates many of these errors, hence the quality of orthography should not be a sole indicator of the level of content (Fallis, 2004). Sloppiness,
repetitive errors, and the accumulation of stylistic inaccuracies, however, may indicate imprecision or even factual errors.

Hungarian web sites show some consistency in maintaining the quality of the Hungarian language. Historically speaking, language innovators and guardians of the language in past centuries have succeeded in making quality of language a crucial element in matching quality content in Hungary. Many sites created outside the country seem to fail the test of language quality immediately, with missing or incorrect diacritics; poor grammar and style; direct translations from the language of the host country; code switching and extensive or inaccurate use of borrowed words from the host language.

The lack of quality of language can also be detected in several categories in Table 1 (1.c, 3.c, d, 4. all, 5.b, 6.b, and 7.c). An earlier tendency in translating and localizing content of the sites of multicultural corporations into Hungarian seems to be disappearing, i.e., quick, unedited translations full of grammatical and stylistic inaccuracies. Absent the general practice of having to document language proficiency in the United States, these pages might well have been created by the first available translator. Trends in software localization and the highly competitive field of translation, as well as the incorporation of editing and proofreading in web site content translations, seem to eventually produce the expected harmony of form and content.

All in all, no electronic resource should be excluded for L2 users. In a language learning environment, an assortment of topics and styles is used. Without the context of the particular language and culture, it is not possible to define scholarly and popular sources, while for specific purposes, sometimes we the popular source is also necessary. If the L2 source is evaluated in its context, the language criteria will gain a new meaning regarding Hungarian resources. It is essential that L2 users be taught the importance of quality of language for solid writing based on

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15. Many of the most typical direct translational errors is not directly noticeable for non-native speakers, e.g., *XXY egy olyan termék, *cégünk egy megoldást kínál a..., *látványos kikapcsolódás, *beleszerelt papírpénzelfogadó, *be lett ígérve, etc.
the history of the Hungarian language. There is also a long-term benefit from the introduction of the main criteria in quality language and style and the use of proper registers (e.g., 2nd or 3rd person forms) in the context of Hungarian language and culture.

Conclusions

This paper highlights the strong necessity of incorporate an L2 information literacy component in the L2 class that focuses on the evaluation of online resources in L2. With an abundance of information and emerging new tools, the World Wide Web represents a new era in L2 learning. Developing informal communities, uncontrolled and uncensored information flow, and evolving information seeking behaviors all have an impact on L2 learners. While considering linguistic and cultural aspects of evaluation, there is a strong need to translate all research results into pragmatic applications in the classroom and in the online learning environment.

The short-term solution for using electronic resources wisely is a strong collaboration among all participants of information seeking. Considering that it is mostly an information need imposed on the information seeker by an external force, the L2 instructor and librarian (L1 speaker) may want to work closely together on facilitating information-seeking, e.g., providing ample resources, from research guides to language aids, in the language appropriate for the proficiency level (Fig.1).
Fig. 1 A model of collaboration for L2 evaluation of online resources

Users with some familiarity with the basics of the Internet tend to use this important research tool more successfully. To customize teaching basic information literacy to the needs of a particular language can be a joint venture of a language instructor and a librarian. The latter is probably well aware of the resources of a particular university, and collaborating with the instructor, students can be consistently directed to trustworthy resources in any given language. Librarians are trained to tailor their information literacy sessions to the needs of their audience. The demonstration of evaluation in a particular language with language-specific examples may be a new practice to consider in the 21st century language learning environment.

References


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