IS1404 E-READ: Evolution of Reading in the Age of Digitization

Position paper

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WG(s): WG3 Experiential and emotional aspects of reading

1. **Potential research contribution** in light of, or linked to

In my research filed we usually present subjects with on a PC monitor some textoid written by experimenters with a word by word (or sentence by sentence) procedure while we measure behavioral (e.g. reaction times, eye movements) or physiological (e.g. ERPs) indexes. This is done with the strong assumption that basic mechanisms of language comprehension are rather independent from the nature of the text and the way it is presented. I personally think that our discipline is mature to critically re-think these assumptions. For this reason I'm really interested in exploring in depth the following variables: nature of the text (literary/fictional/emotional vs scientific/journalist texts), individual attitudes toward different types of written text, the medium (paper written, electronic media, spoken texts). In particular I'm interested in the methodological challenges that these goals need to be faced. For example, traditional ERPs and eye tracking methods can not be easily applied to paper reading situations while other less time sensitive methods such as variation of EEG power in different frequency bands or peripheral indexes such as earth rate or skin conductance may be more easily adapted to very different real world reading situations. For these kind of measures, not necessary sensitive to processes time locked to single words but sensitive to processes that tend to develop in longer time intervals the more interesting psychological phenomena are probably he experiential and emotional ones.

With respect to other interactions with other projects and activities I'm involved in it is worthwhile to mention at least two possibile interactions wih the E-READ project:

- one addendum to the project can be on multilingualism: it may be interesting to inquire pro and contra of reading L2 text on paper versus electronic media that allow easy use of on-line dictionaries and automatic translators. On this topic it is possible that some partners of the ERC project AthEME may be interested to collaborate;

- on teaching side my Department is currently offering a bachelor course on "HCI and

Communication Technologies" and we are currently planning a new master course in English on "Interaction Design". These courses, offered by a Psychology Department in collaboration with the Department of Electronic Engineering are the natural teaching target for E-READ topics and I think we would be happy to explore possible collaborations at different levels: from teaching staff exchanges to Erasmus agreements to double degree agreements with some of the E-READ partners.