

Chapter 2

Lack of Adequate Competences

ABSTRACT

Chapter two is dedicated to the role of competence in correct interpretation of the information provided in communication. Competences of the receiver is the major factor in becoming informed or misinformed by the message. Complexity of communicated information requires corresponding competences to understand, comprehend, and correctly apply the received information. Role of competences, expertise in both subject area or problem domain area, and the informing system and corresponding information infrastructure for accessing or delivering information are discussed.

INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter personal literacy in dealing with natural languages was considered as an important factor influencing the correct informing and the opposite, lack of adequate literacy may lead to misinforming. Some aspects of literacy evolution were considered as well. This chapter goes further by the impact of a receiver's expertise on the success of the informing. Competences are forms of literacy, but usually literacy is considered as the very basic, essential competence to deal with information. With the introduction of computer technology and development of computer information systems the expertise needed for success in becoming informed via the processes used today has become more complicated.

The role of expertise in its multiple forms is the objective of this chapter from point of view of misinforming hazards. The two areas of expertise – expertise in

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problem domain and system's expertise are critically important for success in every area of human activities. Here, the discussion will be limited to analyzing the role of competences in likelihood of misinforming hazards in the context of the market of e-commerce. Commerce provides a natural way to assess relevance, success, risk, or opportunities. And the need for quantifying the output of decisions made based on received information via indirect communication is critical in assessing success of a form of communication, its provider, and the information processing applied.

This chapter attempts to identify competences, literacies, and skills influencing the way people become informed nowadays – the era of Internet, era of globalization, era dominated by indirect informing via Information Technology, as well as essential competences needed to mitigate the risk of becoming misinformed. Nowadays we are witnessing massive introduction of computer delivered services, application based on Machine Learning, Big Data, Artificial Intelligence, and smart devices to everyone's everyday life. Competences, considered as required only for a narrow group of professionals just ten years ago, now are needed to everyone who does not want to become misinformed and outsider.

TWO MAJOR CATEGORIES OF EXPERTISE IN COMPUTER INFORMATION ENVIRONMENTS

Success of informing in the computer information system era are dependent on receiver competences in two areas as identified by Michael Buckland (1991) – subject expertise and expertise to use efficiently the information system providing the service. The impact of the receiver's expertise on both aspects are of crucial importance for the success in information retrieval and are also critically important in e-commerce, which appeared a decade later.

Lack of expertise in using the computer information system or Internet simply excludes such customers from the e-commerce market. The level of receiver's expertise in the subject area affects the success of e-commerce in contrast with the expertise of provider. The difference in the expertise between sender and receiver has impact on success of communication is known as information asymmetry (see next chapter). A high expertise in the subject area reduces information asymmetry and reduces the likelihood of misinforming. Information asymmetry is the major factor for misinforming. Also, the asymmetry in system's expertise may result in misinforming.

Possessing adequate competence reduces the possibility of becoming misinformed, and lacking the needed expertise increases it. Buckland's view reflects the stage of understanding about success of informing acquired by technology provided information services at that time. 1991 is a significant year, when the World-Wide-

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