

SELECTION AND EVALUATION OF
PROFESSIONAL TRANSLATION SERVICE
PROVIDERS BY INTERNATIONAL
COMPANIES IN FINLAND

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Content of the presentation

- ▣ Introduction
- ▣ Research questions
- ▣ Research method
- ▣ Main findings
 - Contextual factors
 - Selection of service providers
 - Evaluation of service providers
- ▣ Conclusions

Introduction

- ▣ Globalization
 - Multiple languages
 - ▣ Translation
- ▣ Little academic research on translation business
- ▣ Research would be beneficial
 - For translation service providers to improve
 - For customers to get better service
- ▣ Area not researched at all – how customers select service providers and how they evaluate service

Research questions

- ▣ How does a customer company select a particular service provider?
- ▣ How does a customer company evaluate service provided?

Research method

- ▣ Interviews with customers
 - 8 companies (9 interviewees)
 - Industries: software, travelling, biotech, metal, marketing research
 - Different in:
 - ▣ Turnover
 - ▣ Number of employees
 - ▣ HQ country
 - ▣ Degree of internationalization
 - ▣ Number of languages

Main findings (1)

- ▣ Contextual factors
 - Emergence of a need to translate – internationalization
 - Documents to be translated – marketing material and technical documentation
 - Organization of translation activities – decentralized
 - Mostly no company policy regarding translation
 - Four types of translators: employees, subsidiaries, freelancers, professional service providers
 - ▣ Most companies use mixed translators

Main findings (2)

- ▣ Selection of service provider
 - Selection process
 - ▣ No official procedure
 - ▣ Personal information channels and direct advertisement
 - ▣ Method of evaluation – test translation
 - Selection criteria
 - ▣ Price
 - ▣ Quality of product
 - ▣ Quality of service delivery
 - ▣ Flexibility
 - Decision-makers
 - ▣ Same individual
 - ▣ Highest level of management – department manager

Main findings (3)

- ▣ Evaluation of service provided
 - No official evaluation method
 - Mostly unofficial, through oral feedback
 - Some companies preferred for initiative for evaluation to come from service provider
 - Wish to perform evaluation on a more regular basis
 - Only negative feedback. No feedback means satisfaction.

Conclusion

- ▣ Selection often based on personal relationship
- ▣ Evaluation mostly informal
- ▣ Terminology – important. Not in the beginning but increases with time.
- ▣ Technical complexity of products has large effect
- ▣ Specialization on specific area might benefit translation agency a lot

Thank you for your attention!