

ject.

To conclude, I would like to emphasize the main projects and challenges of FORMIST in 2004-2005:

The new website

The FORMIST team is working very hard on the new website. It will keep some of the same characteristics of the current website and will add new features. It will be aimed at the same audience but with two different accesses, and will offer new contents, such as news reviews and translations of the major published works on IL. It will be organized around a knowledge base, and will offer the possibility of using parts of courses.

Additionally, we are looking at the possibility of creating an electronic publication similar to *LOEX Quarterly*!

Seminars and conferences

The theme for the 5th *Rencontres FORMIST* will be defined this autumn by the two FORMIST librarians and the members of the Publishing Committee. Before this annual event, we will be pleased to host Cristina Tovote (University of Stockholm), Chair of Nordinfolit and secretary of the IL section of IFLA on October 11th, for a paper presentation on IL for French instructors. A one day seminar is also planned for November on indexing educational documents. The objective of this seminar is to increase librarian awareness of the importance of indexing educational tools with the standard LOM or others.

International matters

I was granted a three-month Fulbright Scholarship to study "Information Literacy in American University Libraries." One of the objectives of this research is to compare French and American systems and programs on IL, and to establish partnerships on specific projects.

Research matters.

Both librarians in FORMIST are involved in research projects and groups.

I hope those of you who can read French will take a look at the FORMIST website. I want to thank LOEX and its former director Deb Biggs Thomas for the opportunity to let American colleagues know that, *Yes, we too are doing things about IL in France!*

Tech Matters: Exploring the Googleverse

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Google is one of the most well-known and successful Web search engines. Librarians and students alike use it on a daily basis to answer questions and conduct research. Not content to simply rest on its high status as a top-notch search tool with an excellent search algorithm and page ranking system, Google aspires to continually develop and offer more sophisticated search options to its users. In this article, we will begin to dip our toes into the Googleverse and investigate some of the search engine's lesser known options and features.

Google is a Calculator

Need a calculator to help tabulate student grades, or maybe to help a student with their math homework, but don't have one close at hand? Google is the answer. Simply type any mathematical expression directly into the search box, hit enter, and *voilà*, the answer appears! The Google calculator can be used to solve questions ranging from the basic [e.g., $(2+2)*10$] to the advanced [e.g., $\sin(\pi/3)$]. One of my favorite uses for this feature is as a unit conversion tool. Type "6 miles in kilometers", and Google will perform the conversion for you. And just for fun, try typing "the answer to life, the universe, and everything" into the search box. The calculator will provide an answer!

Google is a Dictionary

To access a definition culled from the Web, type the word "define" followed immediately by the word you wish to have defined (e.g., define Dublin Core) into the main search box. The entry on the results list includes the definition and a link to the web page from which it was taken. In addition, Google provides a link to further "web definitions" for the word. Although not necessarily as authoritative as a definition from a standard dictionary, this feature is ideal for quick lookups and retrieving comparative definitions for a term.

Tech Matters; Exploring the Googleverse, continued**Google is a Phone Directory**

Also from the main search box, you can enter a name and city, state, area code, or zip code and retrieve an address and phone number listing. The directory contains both residential and business listings. Best of all, this option allows reverse look-up searching so with only a phone number (including area code), you can retrieve a complete directory listing including name and address.

Google is a Business Directory

<http://local.google.com/>

More specialized than the regular phone directory feature, Google has also developed a new “local search” option designed to “find local businesses and services on the Web”. Still in beta, this feature prompts users to enter a type of business (e.g., tuxedo rentals) and a location (e.g., Mount Pleasant, MI). The search tool then returns a list of merchants in the area including addresses, and phone numbers, along with a map of the area pinpointing each store’s location.

Currently, Google’s “local search” feature can only be used to find businesses in the United States and Canada. Once the search tool moves out of beta, the folks at Google intend to expand this search option to include other parts of the globe!

Google is a Translator

http://www.google.com/language_tools

If you or your students should come across a web page written in another language, or perhaps receive an e-mail in a language you don’t read, Google’s language tools can provide assistance. You will find a link to these tools located beside the search box on the main page. The translator tool allows you to enter either a string of text, or the URL of a web page that you wish to translate. You then use a drop-down menu to select the language of origin and the language you wish to read (e.g., French to English), and press the “Translate” button. Although the translations

are not always perfect, they are usually good enough to allow you to interpret the text in a meaningful way.

The features described above represent just a fraction of the many extra search options and tools that have been developed by the innovative folks at Google over the past few years. For a more comprehensive list, just follow the link to “more>>” from the main search page.

Once you know that these features exist, you can use them to impress students and faculty members during instruction sessions. I find that demonstrating such features gives students the impression that I’m a technologically savvy librarian. Simply demonstrating a few “search engine secrets” can go a long way toward grabbing the attention of the class and convincing students that I might have other information worth learning. It’s then much easier to hold their attention as we move to discussing more important topic such as web evaluation and working with library search tools.

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Vol. 31, No. 3

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