Aim
Evaluate the interest for geographers to use Google Scholar (GS) over the commercial databases Web of Science (WoS), Scopus (multidisciplinary databases), and GeoRef (specialized in geosciences).

Methods
Searches in the four bibliographic tools (BT) of a sample consisting 720 citations of three dissertations (Belleflamme, 2015; Dubois, 2014; Trotta, 2014) presented in the ULiege (Belgium) Department of Geography during the 2014 - 2015 academic year, respectively in Climatology, Tourism and Geomatics.

Results

Findings and Conclusions

- In terms of indexed references, GS is the most comprehensive bibliographic tool, having found the majority of references searched with values close to 100 % for the three bibliographies, all document types combined.

- Considering the results and analyzes above, it appears that GS is a bibliographic tool that behaves very well when it comes to recover references indexed by traditional bibliographic databases.

- Our results indicate a much higher potential for GS to find “unique” bibliographic references such as journal articles but also grey literature, books and book chapters, not indexed by commercial databases.

- More extensive analysis are needed to confirm our findings.

Figure 1. Document types cited in the three dissertations

Figure 2. Bibilographic references by sub-discipline and % indexed in BT

Figure 3. Journal articles by sub-discipline and % indexed in BT

Figure 2. Bibliographic tools overlap for the dissertation in Climatology

GS retrieves 379 of the 448 references in Tourism which is the largest number of references among the bibliographic tools analyzed.

- 198 references are indexed by all the tools, excluding GeoRef which does not index any reference for this bibliography.

Figure 3. Bibliographic tools overlap for the dissertation in Tourism

GS retrieves 201 references from a total of 215 references, GS retrieves 201 references.

- 80 references are common to WoS, Scopus and GS.

- GeoRef, retrieves only 17 references for this bibliography.

Figure 4. Bibliographic tools overlap for the dissertation in Geomatics

From a total of 215 references, GS retrieves 201 references.

- 80 references are common to the three bibliographic tools, GS, Scopus and WoS.

- GeoRef indexes only one reference (not represented on the diagram).

It turns out that for the three bibliographies, it is always GS that indexes an additional number of “unique” references, and recovers almost 100 % of the other bibliographic databases.

Figure 5. “Overlap” and Venn Diagrams

- 110 references are common to WoS, Scopus and GS.

- GeoRef, retrieving only 17 references for this bibliography.

Scientific literature uses in Geography: indexing and “overlap” in four bibliographic tools

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Referee: M. H., 2016, Administration of travel and tourism industries in the Northwest of the country

Belleflamme, A., 2015, Detection of past and future atmospheric circulation changes over the North Atlantic region with the help of an automatic circulation type classification

Dubois, C., 2014, Qualitative applications for wine companies in the Wallonia.