

## Project overview

MeLLANGE (Multilingual eLearning in LANGuage Engineering) is a European Union funded project which aims to provide translation students and professionals with an opportunity to acquire and/or update translation-related skills to fulfill the demands of the global market place. Many studies (e.g. the EU-sponsored SPICE-PREP, the LETRAC survey on the curricula for translators, and the translators' section of the LEIT Industry Needs Survey) have shown that translators constantly need to acquire new skills and demonstrate a high degree of flexibility and mobility (in accordance with objectives 3 and 4 of the "Documents Uniques de Programmation 2000-2006 (DOCUP)" of the EU). MeLLANGE was launched on 1 October 2004 and will run until 30 September 2007. The project builds on the outcomes of eCoLoRe, another EU funded project which was completed in April 2005 (<http://ecolore.leeds.ac.uk>).

### Principal aims of MeLLANGE are:

- to design and provide guidelines for best practices for designing online courses for translation students AND professionals.

The project partners have been developing two full online courses (on corpora for translators and on translation memory systems) as well as sample units for courses in other areas such as Localisation, Markup Languages and Specialised Translation. These courses will have been extensively tested by the end of this project, both by students, professionals and by e-learning experts. The ultimate project's aim is to provide guidelines for others wanting to create online courses for translators in the future.

The online courses created by the project partners will be used by the partner universities and also offered as continuing professional development courses to professionals.

Another key activity involves the collection and marking (annotation) of translations done by students across Europe who were asked to translate a series of specific texts. This selection of source texts with their translations ("corpus") clearly identifies problems student translators encounter in the translation process and is therefore a valuable resource for anyone teaching translation as a subject.

- to design a European Masters in Translation and Translation Technology which will be offered by the universities taking part in this project.

MeLLANGE pursues the collaborative creation of corpus-based eLearning teaching contents within the framework of the Bologna declaration. The Bologna declaration of the EU aims to promote mobility and exchanges among educational institutions. MeLLANGE will therefore address the issue of a vocational training policy at the European level in allowing the coordination of Masters of Arts (MA) programmes, with the ultimate goal of designing a European Masters of Arts.

## Target groups

Students in initial vocational training intending to become language professionals

Active language professionals such as translators, technical writers, localisers, language resource managers, trainers, intending to update and expand their competences in order to enable them to compete in emerging and changing markets in Europe.

MeLLANGE enables the target groups to take advantage of Europe's rich cultural and linguistic diversity, to benefit from corpus-based 'real-life' teaching material, and to customise their training by accessing specialised modules. Language professionals can take advantage of the modularity of the course to select only the specific modules they need.

## The consortium/partnership

Brings universities and schools of translation, experienced in translator training together with language professionals. It emerges naturally from a long-standing relationship with industrial and professional partners which has allowed the university partners to introduce new skills and competences into their curricula. Three core partners – the Universities of Paris 7 (the promoter), University of Leeds and University of Vienna – coordinate and contribute to the work. The professional partner – the Institute of Translation and Interpreting (ITI) in the United Kingdom – and the industrial partner, Praetorius, France – a multilingual content management company, each coordinate a work package closely related to professionals and industry (user needs and quality assurance). A second group of partners, the University Pompeu Fabra (Barcelona), the Advanced School of Modern Languages for Interpreters and Translators of the University of Bologna (Forlì, Italy), the Institute for Applied Linguistics, Translation and Interpreting, University of Saarland (Saarbrücken), contribute to data provision, and the design of teaching material. The ETI at the University of Geneva contributes resources to the project, using funds from the Swiss Confederation.

An additional partner, Palazky University Olomouc, in the Czech Republic, is working closely with the College of Nyiregyhaza, Hungary, University of Zagreb, Croatia, University of Bucharest, Romania, "Babes Bolyai" University of Cluj-Napoca, Romania, and Tallinn University, Estonia to provide input and feedback to the online courses designed by the project partners.

## **Corpora & e-Learning questionnaire survey summary**

In October 2004 an initial meeting between the partners created a project plan and served as an introductory forum. Further project meetings and workshops have taken place.

One of the first deliverables of the project was the Needs Analysis survey designed to determine whether the project objectives were relevant and would fulfil the needs of translation students and professionals. The partners created and disseminated both a paper and an electronic survey and ITI collated the results.

The partners did not have any pre-conceived ideas of the expected volume or quality of response to the survey. As regards volume of response, the partners are extremely happy with both volume and quality. The survey raised many important questions and has generated strong debate amongst translation professionals.

The partners will take a realistic approach to the problems and issues raised by the survey in order to deliver solutions to the target groups.

### **Objectives**

The central objectives of the survey were to identify and measure current usage of Corpora and the interest in eLearning.

### **Methodology**

The survey was disseminated in the form of a questionnaire by ITI and university partners. It is estimated that through this process some 15,000 students and language industry professionals are now aware of the MeLLANGE project. The survey was available through web sites, by email and in hard copy.

### **Survey Questions**

The questionnaire was created specifically to extract respondents' experiences and concerns with Corpora and eLearning. The full survey results can be found on the ITI website [www.iti.org.uk](http://www.iti.org.uk) – Surveys & Reports and the MeLLANGE project website <http://www.mellange.eila.jussieu.fr/Mellange-Results-1.pdf>.

### **Respondent metrics**

Total respondents - 1015 (paper 451, electronic 564)

<b>Respondents by country</b>	<b>UK</b>	<b>France</b>	<b>Germany</b>	<b>Italy</b>	<b>Spain</b>	<b>Unidentified</b>
	567	125	25	19	4	275

\* In the summary that follows the text in italics represents questions asked in the survey.



## 1. General information

74% of respondents are professionals and 26% are students.

Of the professionals –

77.8% are translators and 22.2% interpreters, 61.9% work full time. 67.1% had more than 5 years experience and 85.6% work freelance.

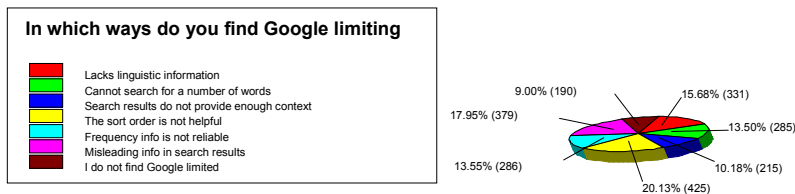
It is interesting that only 26% of respondents were students given the strength of the university partners across Europe although this can partly be explained by the fact that some students also work as translators and may therefore have responded as professionals, not as students.

It was expected that more translators than interpreters would respond given the relative numbers of individuals in each category of the profession. There is a close correlation between the results of those who work full time/part time and years of experience. The survey suggests that those with 5 or more years experience tend to work full time and as a freelance.

## 2. Using the web to research terminology

Of the 94.4% who use Google to research terminology 59.2% search by *Subject keywords* with 40.8% searching by *Company or product*. 72.2% limited their search by language or country to refine the results.

Many respondents found Google limiting citing *The sort order is not helpful* 20.1% and *Misleading information in search results* 18% as the main problems. Other problems included *Lacks linguistic information* 15.7% and *Search results do not provide enough context to be useful* 10.2%. Only 9% of respondents agreed that they did not find Google limited.



Sites belonging to particular companies, probably clients, are visited on a regular basis, 42.3% with 6.7% not visiting other sites regularly.

The statistics show that there is no difference between professionals and students using Google to research terminology. However, professionals use company/product searches more than students, 42.7% against 34.5%

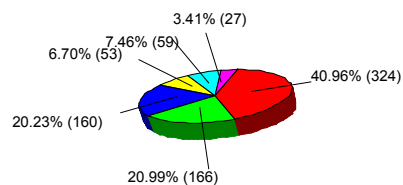
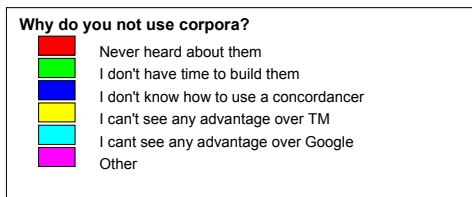
Google appears to be an essential tool for research, however the limitations (88.5% of professionals and 96.7% of students finding it limited in some way) highlighted by the survey suggest that its flexibility and usefulness may not be adequate enough to deliver a total solution to the translation market.

## 3. Corpora

Asked about their use of corpora 43.9% reported that they *Collect domain specific texts* (which can also include translation memories). Of these 69.6% are collected in *Electronic form* with the remaining 30.4% being *Paper based*.

41.8% use *Corpora in their translation practice* (44.2% professionals and 34.6% students). Of these 25.9% use *Corpora of the target language*, 22.8 of the *Source language* and 15.9% use *Domain specific corpora*.

The question “why do you not use corpora” generated an interesting response with 41% having *Never heard of them*. Of those who are aware of corpora 21% reported that they *Do not have time to build them* and 6.7% could *Not see any advantage over translation memories*. The fact that only 7.5% could *Not see any advantage over Google* confirms that Google (94.4% use it) is currently the primary source for researching terminology. Almost the same percentage of students (38%) against professionals (42%) had *Never heard of corpora*.



In this section we asked three key questions each requiring a yes/no answer. 84% of respondents stated their interest in a (C8) *Quick, tailored service to supply a corpus for their domain and language specific needs*. 83.4% would be interested (C9) in *A tool for extracting terms from a domain specific corpus* whilst 85.9% are interested (C10) in *Learning more about the potential that corpora offer*.

In all three questions students were more enthusiastic

- C8 - students 95.6% professionals 79.7%
- C9 - students 92.8% professionals 80%
- C10 - students 91.7% professionals 83.7%

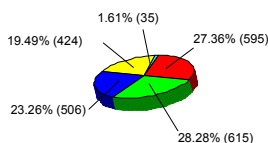
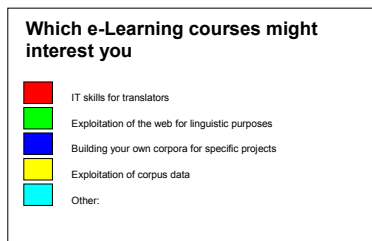
Although a large number of respondents had *Not heard of corpora* and of those who had only a small percentage could perceive their use as an advantage the project is encourage to see that a very high percentage of both professionals and students registered their interest in learning more about their use. It is clear that the project has alerted professionals and students to the existence of corpora and also created an interest of sufficient weight to remain determined to deliver to our specific aims (see above).

#### 4. eLearning:

The respondents were asked if they *Participate in email lists or other forums*. Of the 44.4% who answered "yes" only 63.5% thought that such *Lists and forums were useful*. Asked for an opinion on what eLearning could offer translators 22.2% thought that *Learning at a distance* would be a benefit, with approximately 40% believing that they would be able to *Work at their own pace and time*. A high percentage of students (82.3%) do not participate in any email lists or other forums with 46% of professionals also not participating.

Interestingly 44.3% thought that during an eLearning course they would prefer to *Meet tutors at intervals* with 30.8% preferring to *Meet students at intervals*. Only 24.9% said that they would prefer to *Learn at a distance*.

If available, 28.3% would be interested in an eLearning course on *Exploitation of the web for linguistic purposes*, 27.4% would be interested in *IT skills for translators* with 23.3% interested in a course to *Build their own corpora* and 19.5% a course for *Exploitation of corpus data*. Professionals reported their first choice as being *Exploitation of the web* (24.4%) whilst student's top score was *IT skills for translators* (31.8%).



67.8% would be interested in *eLearning packages for translators* with 13.8% stating no interest.

Although a large percentage of respondents stated their interest in eLearning packages for translators there does not seem to have been any clear reason for this in the survey. Each of the questions in this section D3, D4, D5, and D6 returned similar percentages across the selection of answers. Do professionals and students consider eLearning to be an innovation or simply a new area of learning that should not be ignored? Is it possible that the respondents believe that eLearning will offer many opportunities for enhancing skills and competences especially for continuing professional development but at this time do not fully understand why?

The wealth of information collated from the survey is calculated to provide valuable pointers to the needs of the various user groups, thus enabling the partners in industry, academic institutions and professional associations to develop MeLLANGE further.

For more information on the MeLLANGE project, please visit <http://mellange.eila.jussieu.fr/>.

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ITI July 2006