



**Preliminary Summary Report on the Results of the Survey Conducted among Users of
Language Technologies in April-May 2011**

Presented by AnneMarie Taravella

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Over the months of April and May of 2011, the Language Technologies Research Centre (LTRC) and CROP, the Centre de recherche sur l'opinion publique, carried out an important study among the users of language technologies. The survey was developed by AnneMarie Taravella, a Certified Translator (OTTIAQ) and PhD student in Administration at the Université de Sherbrooke.

The Language Technologies Research Centre (LTRC) is a research centre founded amidst a partnership between the National Research Council (NRC), the Translation Bureau of Canada (TB) and the Université du Québec en Outaouais (UQO).

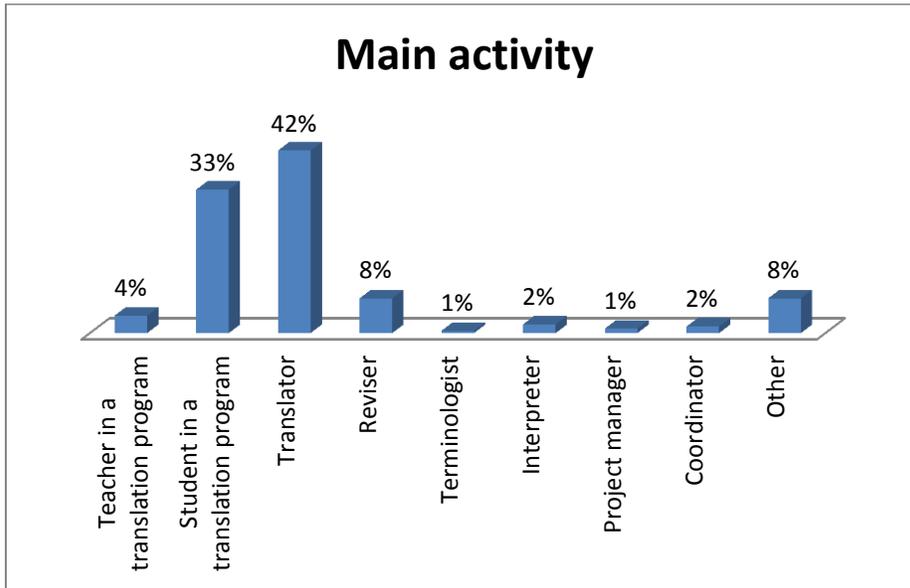
The following highlights the key points of the results of the survey. Happy reading!

Alan Bernardi

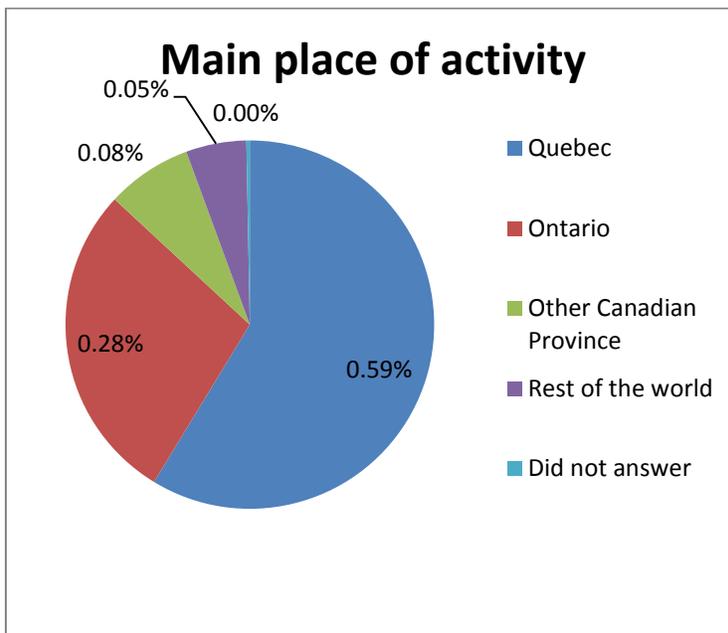
Director General of the Language Technologies Research Centre

Portrait of Respondents

The survey was conducted among 380 respondents, of which 76% were women and 24% men. 323 respondents agreed to answer the question about their date of birth. Their ages ranged from 19 to 73. The average age was 40.5 and the median age was 41. Those in question were primarily translators (42%) and students in a translation program (33%).

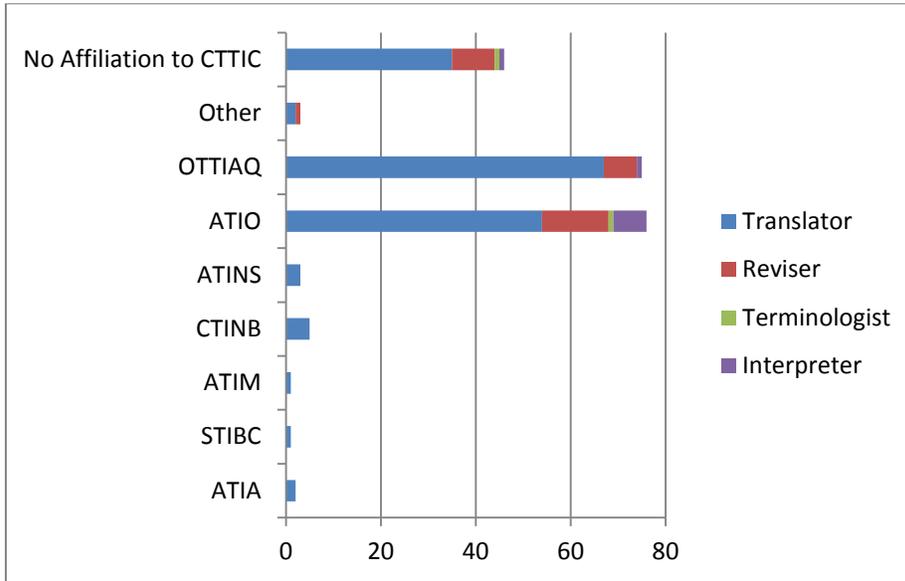


Most respondents performed their main activity in Québec (59 %) and in Ontario (28 %):

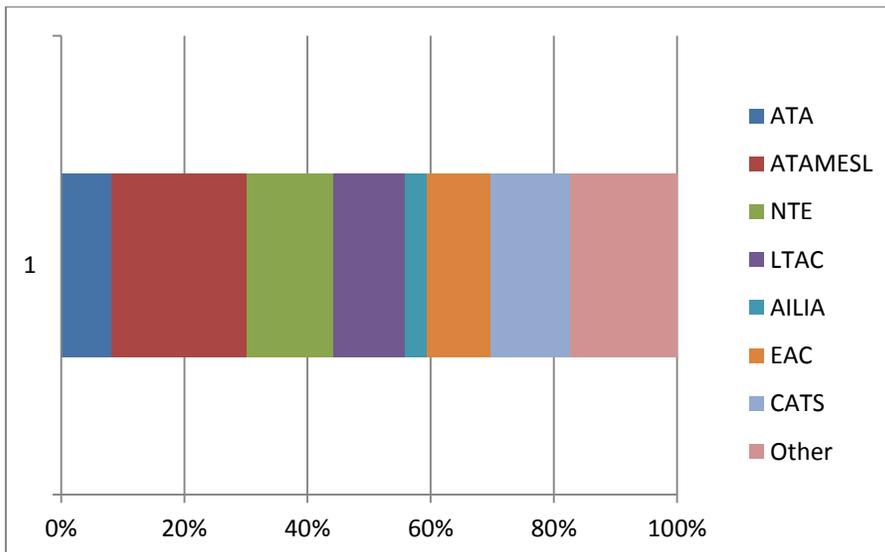


A large majority of the respondents (74.5%) worked from English into French and 17.1% worked from French into English.

193 respondents (50.1 %) belonged to at least one member association of CTTIC. Among those who stated being translators, revisers, terminologists or interpreters (200 respondents), 38% were members of ATIO and 37.5% were members of OTTIAQ. The number of respondents belonging to each of the other member associations of CTTIC was equal to or less than 5 (2.5%).

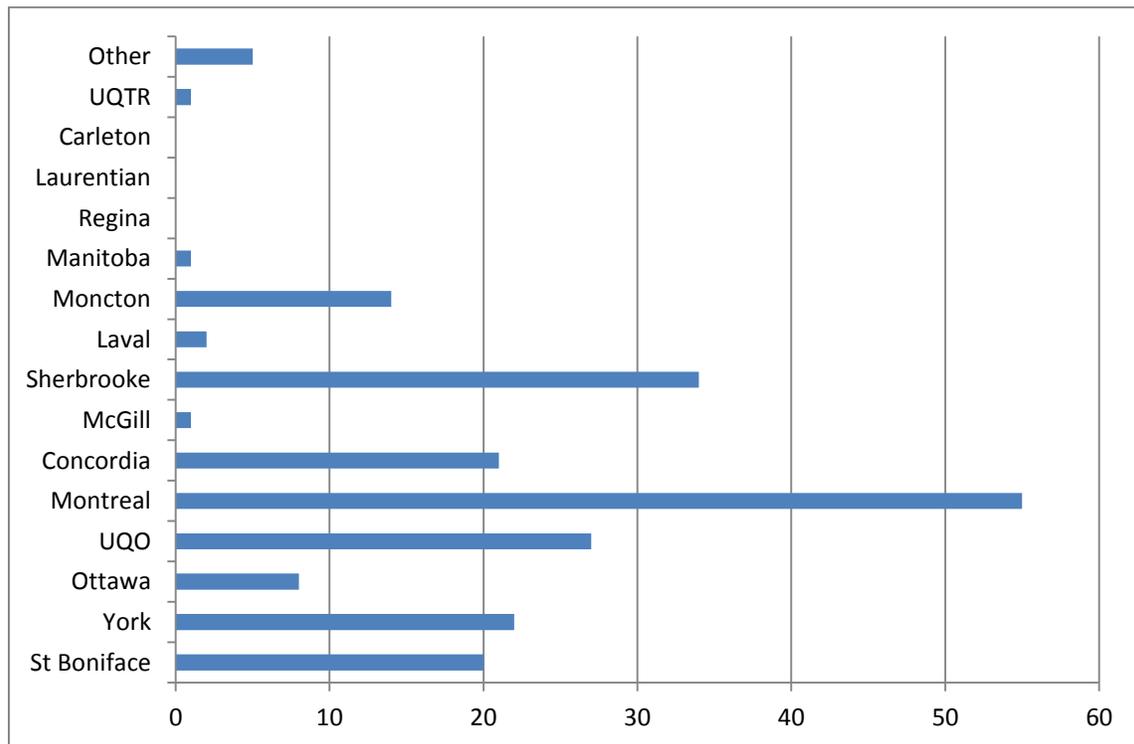


68 respondents (18%) belonged to at least one association of language professionals. 19 respondents belonged to the Association des travailleurs autonomes et micro-entreprises en services linguistiques (ATAMESL), 12 to the Network of Translators in Education (NTE), 11 to the Canadian Association of Translation Studies (CATS), 10 to the Literary Translators' Association of Canada (LTAC), 9 to the Editors' Association of Canada (EAC), 7 to the American Translators Association (ATA) and 3 to the Language Industry Association (AILIA).



The other associations mentioned (15 respondents chose the answer “Other”) include the following: the Canadian Association for the Study of Discourse and Writing (CASDW), the Fusionistas, the Association of Linguistic Service Managers (AGCL), the Canadian Association of Legal Translators (CALT), the German-American Lawyers Association (DAJV), the Society of Swiss Lawyers, the Réseau Entraide Traduction Santé (ETS), the Canadian Science Writers Association (CWSA), the International Association of Conference Interpreters (AIIC), the Organizacion Mexicana de Traductores (OMT), the National Association of Judiciary Interpreters and Translators (NAJIT), the Asociacion Profesional Espanola de Traductores e Interpretes (APETI), the Associacio de Traductors I Interprets de Catalunya (ATIC), the National Accreditation Authority for Translators and Interpreters (NAATI – Australia), the Iraqi Translators Association (ITA), the Belgian Chambers of Translators, Interpreters and Philologists (CBTIP) and the Association des auteurs et auteurs de l’Outaouais (AAAO).

The respondents who stated being a student in or teacher of a translation program (211), were members of the Université de Montréal (26 %), the Université de Sherbrooke (16 %), the Université du Québec en Outaouais (13 %), York University and Concordia University (10 % respectively), the Université de Saint-Boniface (9 %), the University of Moncton (7 %) and the University of Ottawa (4%).



Section 1: Use of Information Technologies

27 % of the respondents used a **laptop computer** for 90% to 100% of their work week as a professional or student.

However, the respondents did not have a tendency to use **shared computers** with a username (e.g., university labs). 63 % never used shared computers, and among those who did use them, 92 % dedicated less than 40 % of their work week to them. 97 % of the respondents never used public computers.

As an indication, among those who used shared computers for more than 40% of their work week (3% of the total respondents), the following percentages were noted: 60 % were under 30 years of age and 90 % stated their primary activity is being a student in a translation program.

Telecommuting

61 % of respondents claimed to work always on the same computer, while 26% navigated between several workstations, each one consisting of active software licenses.

39 % of respondents wished to increase the amount of work they did via telecommuting. Among them, the main reason prohibiting them from doing so was the **limited number of software licenses** they owned, followed immediately by the fact that they could not **communicate with other users**.

The respondents did not seem concerned about the confidentiality of information or the need for technical assistance when it came to increased telecommuting. Half of them indicated, however, that the lack of communication between users was an obstacle to performing more of their work by telecommuting.

This result is confirmed by the fact that 88% of respondents (whether they intended to increase their amount of telecommuting or not) admitted that the possibility of **communicating with other users of language technologies** that they used or intended using, seemed useful, if not very useful.

Other reasons invoked as being obstacles to an increase in the amount of work done by translation professionals via telecommuting were related in part to a lack of time and to the cost of software, as well as concerns of public order (firewall configuration, limited access to internet or other computers than one's own), but also to resistance from employers or concerns related to the synchronization of data.

Section 2: Use of Language Technologies

We noticed a lack of consensus on the spontaneous definition of language technology. The answers to the question: “Describe, in your own words, what a ‘language technology’ means to you?” the respondent’s answers ranged from

“Technology used by language professionals”

to

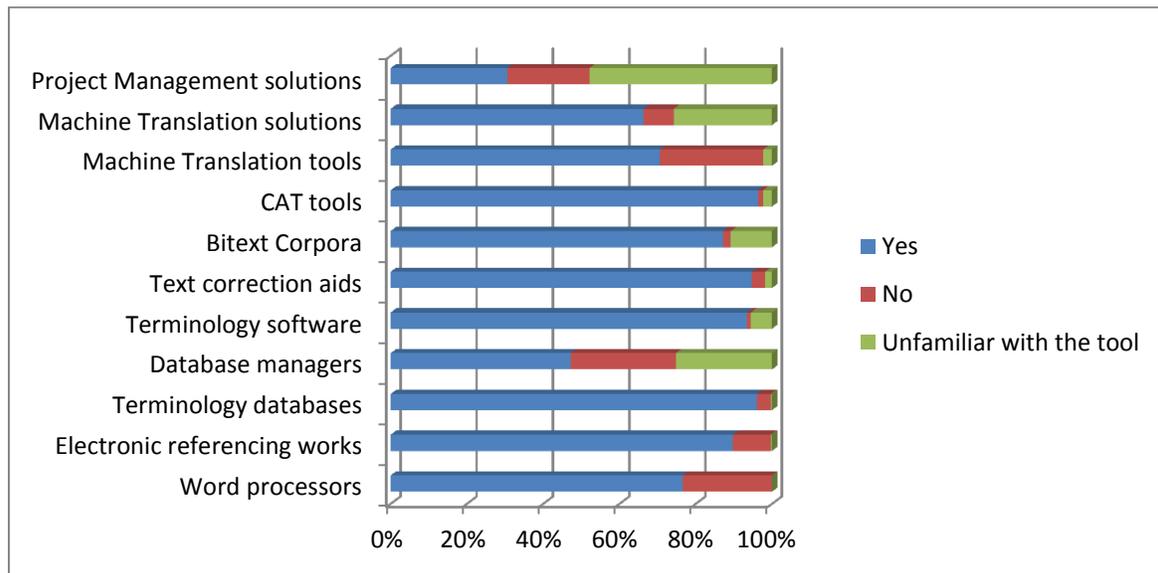
“Word processors, correction software (Antidote), electronic dictionaries, electronic referencing works, internet websites for translation help (Linguee, WeBiText), databases, pretty much anything electronic that can help with translation, writing and revision”,

and including

“Specific definition: a technology that is useful only to language professionals (editors, revisers, translators, terminologists, interpreters). MS Word is not an LT; LogiTerm is. A broad definition (all technology useful to language professionals) would encompass all technologies, from pencils to satellite imagery (aerospace).”

As a general rule, **the proposed definitions contained a computerized element available at the language professional’s disposal that would make his work easier or more efficient.** The differences of opinion seemed primarily centered on the nature of the list of tools to be included in the language technology field.

Answers to the question: “Are the following tools considered language technologies?”



Computer-Assisted Translation (CAT) tools (e.g., SDL Trados), text correction aids (e.g., Antidote), terminology databases or term bases (e.g., Termium), bitext corpora/bitext aligners

(e.g., TransSearch) and electronic referencing works (e.g., le Robert CD-ROM) are practically unanimously recognized as language technologies. The results were more mixed when it comes to automatic translation tools (e.g., Google Translate), automatic translation solutions (par ex., SDL Language Weaver) and word processors. As for project management tools (e.g., Flow) and database management tools (e.g., File Maker Pro), they were only included as language technologies by less than half of the respondents.

Active and Passive Language Technologies

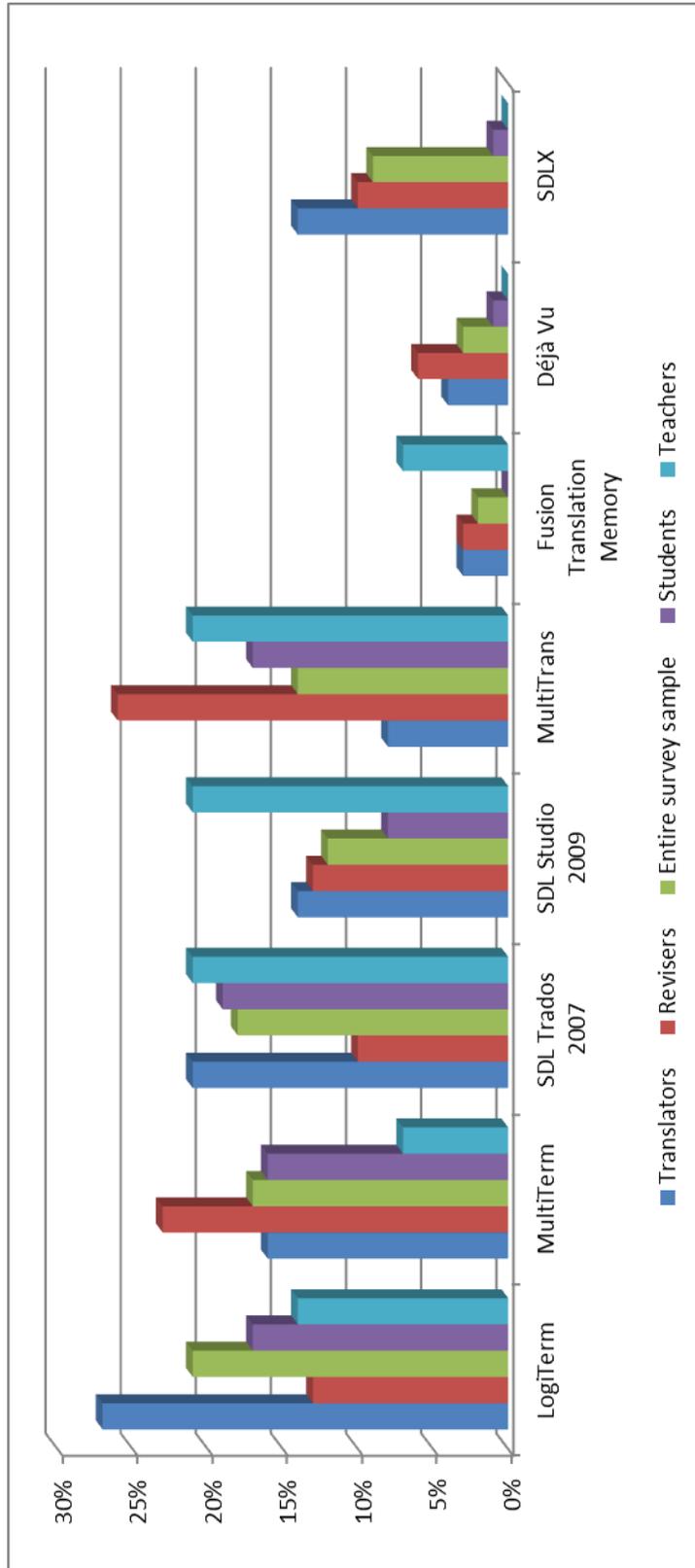
According to the survey's designer, "a passive language technology is a tool that allows a user to consult linguistic information, without modifying it, or obtaining a translation from non-modifiable sources".

97 % of respondents claimed to use at least one passive language technology. Among these technologies, the most commonly used were: Termium (by 92% of respondents) and le Grand dictionnaire terminologique (87 %), followed by Antidote (69 %) and, much farther behind by Linguee.fr, WeBiText and Reverso (34 % respectively), then Google Translate (31 %) and IATE, the European term base (20 %).

According to the survey's designer, "an active language technology is a tool that allows a user to generate linguistic information and modify it, or obtain a translation from modifiable sources".

54% of respondents claimed to use at least one active language technology. Among these technologies, the most commonly used were: LogiTerm (by 21 % of respondents), SDL Trados 2007 (18 %), MultiTerm (17 %), MultiTrans (14 %) and SDL Studio 2009 (12 %).

Answer to: "From the following list of active language technologies, which ones do you use?"



Respondents whose main activity was translation were the most likely to use an active language technology: only 27% declared not using a single active language technology (versus 46% of the entire survey sample).

Assessment of Language Technologies

97% of the respondents who indicated that they used language technologies claimed that they helped them **save time**, 90% claimed that they improved the **quality** of their work and 90% claimed that they increased the **uniformity** of their work. 44% of the respondents who indicated using language technologies claimed that it was a requirement of their employer or of their clients.

In terms of the importance of the criteria, the users valued, above all, the improvement in quality (42% of respondents placed this criterion at the top of the list) and the time saved (41%), while uniformity of their work was the primary criterion for only 15% of respondents as the main reason for using language technologies.

For 44% of respondents, the main evaluation criterion for the choice of language technology was the ease of use, while for 41%, it was the relativity of the information obtained. **Economic return was the main criterion for only 15% of respondents.**

59% of respondents estimated that they were unlikely or very unlikely to purchase a language technology in the next 12 months for the first time. For 38% of those respondents, it was because they had already acquired their first language technology, the secondary reasons being other reasons or the fact they were still unsure of what they needed. (The reasons pertaining to the "other" category were, among others: Apple environment, tools furnished by the employer, purchases already made, the user was not the person who decided to make the purchase, lack of tools in the language combination being used, the accent being put on the work aspect and not the technologies). It is also especially because they do not yet know what they need that 54% of the respondents are unlikely or very unlikely to buy training courses over the next 12 months.

82% of respondents, however, estimated that they were likely or very likely to search for information related to one or several language technologies over the next 12 months.

The majority of respondents did not fear that the language technology tools would introduce translation errors, harm the flow or coherence of a translation, slow down their thought process or creativity, or that they work too slowly or that the work environment be ill suited to their needs. Those who feared compatibility problems between a tool and other software were a little greater in number, but the majority evaluated the risk being between 1 and 5 (on a scale of 1 to 10, with 1 being the lowest risk).