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New electronic thesauri

Linguistic Systems BV (Nijmegen, Netherlands) and Microlytics Inc. (East Rochester, NY, USA) are cooperating in the commercial development of a suite of multilingual reference works to be released both on diskette and as independent, handheld units.

The diskette-based versions will be called MultiTrans. Their handheld counterparts

appropriate target language; synonyms of, and words related to, each of those translations will also be immediately accessible in both source and target languages.

Konst calls this approach "culturally sensitive". He adds: "The nature of semantic clusters vary enormously from language to language, and just as in any good bilingual reference work, the similarities and differences must be made clear to the user."

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spent 60 person-years developing these electronic multilingual thesaurus-dictionaries. Five languages (English, French, Spanish, German and Dutch) are ready - a total of 20 language pairs. Six additional languages are in preparation: Italian, Japanese and the Scandinavian group.

The Nijmegen-based firm's managing director Leo Konst claims the thesaurus-dictionaries are "unique tools for translators," in that they link not just words but also semantic clusters from language to language.

Not only, for example, will the English word "area" be translated in its various meanings ("surface area in square units," "location," "abstract domain," etc.) into the

as separate language-pair consumer modules (US\$200).

Microlytics Inc. will market Multi-Trans. The East Rochester firm will also participate in the development of the handheld TR 300.

Linguistic Systems BV, Keizer Kareplein 32-B, 6511 NH Nijmegen, The Netherlands. Tel: +31 (80) 540 333.

Microlytics Inc., 300 Main Street, East Rochester, NY 14445, USA. Tel: +1 (716) 248 9150.

(From the *Language Industry Survey*, Press Bulletin 7, 1990)

Electronic dictionaries galore

Three American companies, Franklin, Proximity, and Houghton Mifflin have been selling electronic dictionaries at an astonishing rate.

Franklin Computers is collaborating with Rusky Yazyk Publishers (USSR) to develop the first handheld electronic bilingual Russian-English dictionary.

"This Russian-English bilingual dictionary is the most current and important dictionary approved in the USSR," said Morton E. David, Franklin's chairman and CEO.

Franklin has also signed an agreement with

Oxford University Press (UK) for the exclusive world rights to the newly released fourth edition of the Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary in handheld form.

Another Franklin agreement, this time with Collins Publishers (Scotland, UK), paves the way for the development of a series of Spanish-English, French-English, German-English, and Italian-English, handheld electronic dictionaries.

Meanwhile, Proximity Technology Inc., a Franklin subsidiary, has entered a licensing agreement with Aldus Corp., Claris Corp., Sun Microsystems, and Finland's Nokia Data Systems, enabling these companies to use Proximity's International Spelling Verification, Spelling Correction, and Hyphenation