

ELIS 2025 – Implications of the results for translation didactics. Paradigm shifts in the language industry

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Abstract: The 2025 edition of ELIS, the European Language Industry Survey, focussed among other on the market evolution, the attractiveness of jobs in the language industry and the impact of AI on the language industry and paid also particular attention to skill levels and internship practices. This paper will analyse some questions of the survey for different segments, mainly the trainer and the student segment, showing at the same time, that the language service provision market is undergoing a paradigmatic change and how this change is perceived by trainers and students of translation and interpreting (T&I) programmes. Referring to the *ELIS 2025 Report* and by comparing the different views of the various participant groups, i.e. independent language professionals, language companies, private and public language departments, university staff members and students, conclusions that may have an impact on future study programmes in T&I are drawn. The suggested programme updates reflect the paradigm shift that is taking place in the language industry and thus make future graduates fit(ter) for the future market.

Keywords: European Language Industry Survey (ELIS), language service provision, T&I study programmes, fit for market, EMT Competence Framework 2022

1. Setting

Back in 2007, Gouadec recognised that “if professional translators get satisfaction from their work, they certainly do not translate for the sheer pleasure of translating. They mean business.” (Gouadec 2007: 3). Just a few years later, this business had undergone industrialisation as is clear from the title of Dunne's 2012 article in the Translation, Commerce and Economy special issue of *Translation Spaces*, ‘The industrialization of translation. Causes, consequences and challenges’. Today, the translation market is a global market with enormous potential. According to the *Slator 2025 Language Industry Market Report*, the combined US-dollar revenue of Slator

2025 LSPI companies grew 6.6% in 2024 to more than USD 8.4 billion. In terms of employability, it is therefore important for translation and interpreting (T&I) training institutions to monitor this market closely.

At the same time, the language industry is currently undergoing increasingly rapid and profound changes that not only affect the translation and interpreting (T&I) market itself, but which also have an impact on upstream training. There is agreement within the scientific community that academic training must, among other things, seek cooperation with the language industry and overcome the gap between theory and practice. Referring to the recent multifaceted character of the translation market and to its evolution, the foreword to the EMT Competence Framework (2022) states that “these changes need to be taken on board in academic translator training programmes, so that future graduates become aware of both the challenges and opportunities that they represent and can adapt their skills and practices” (EMT 2022: 2). In the introduction to the *Handbook of the Language Industry*, the editors state that they “envision this handbook as one that can further bridge the gap between academia (in both teaching and research) and the industry” (Angelone et al. 2024: 2). Silaban et al. (2025) observe that “greater collaboration between institutions and industry stakeholders is essential to ensure that future translators are equipped with both the technical and intercultural competencies required in the 21st century” (Silaban et al. 2025: 35).

Beyond these general statements, recent studies indicate that T&I programmes are also taking technological innovations on board. For instance, Rothwell, Moorkens and Svoboda (2025) report from an EMT survey conducted in 2023: “the results show the responsiveness of programmes to innovations in translation technology, with increased compulsory inclusion of machine translation, post-editing, and quality evaluation, and a rapid response to the release of generative tools” (Rothwell et al. 2025: 1). However, there is still a gap to bridge between the relevant stakeholders’ expectations in the translation industry and the degree holders’ competencies. This makes it necessary to explore “the potential areas for enhancement and future directions that can improve the consistency between academic translation training and industry demands” (Koka et al. 2024: 9). Therefore, it appears clear that it is of utmost importance for academia to observe the market and draw the appropriate didactical conclusions from these changes. To this end, T&I trainers and programme designers rely on several sources.

CSA Research is based in Massachusetts, USA and focuses its research on the global content and language services markets. It offers proprietary methodologies, data, insights, events, advisory, consulting and leadership programmes, and produces *The Language Services Market* report about the industry.

Nimdzi is a market research and international consulting company located in Seattle, Washington, USA, where experts from different sectors help clients from the language industry to conquer international markets, to optimise their language services and to keep pace with the newest developments in the language industry. The yearly

Nimdzi's top 100 report ranks the largest language service providers across the globe and tracks trends in the language industry.

Slator, mentioned earlier, is a Switzerland-based company that runs an online platform. Slator researches and analyses the language market, hosts SlatorCon, a language industry executive conference, and publishes a weekly language industry podcast. The Slator Language Service Provider Index ranks the world's largest translation, localisation, interpreting and language technology providers and has become a reliable source for anyone observing the current language service provision market.

Some national associations also conduct surveys on the language industry in their home countries. For example, the Association of Translation Companies (ATC) UK publishes a *Language Industry Survey & Report* every other year, in collaboration with Nimdzi Insights. The latest edition of this report was published in 2025.¹

The European Language Industry Survey (ELIS) is one of a series of such market studies, although its scope and subject matter are much broader than those of other market analyses in this field, and it focuses mainly on the European market. ELIS insights are not based on objective, verifiable data. They indicate the personal opinions and expectations of the participants. ELIS therefore reflects the general mood of the market.

2. ELIS

ELIS 2025 was the 13th edition and was organised by the EUATC², the European Union of Associations of Translation Companies, in cooperation with ELIA³, the European Industry Language Association, FIT Europe⁴, the European regional centre of the Fédération Internationale des Traducteurs/International Federation of Translators, GALA⁵, the Globalization and Localization Association based in the USA, the EMT university network⁶, the European Commission's Language Industry group (LIND)⁷ and Women in Localization⁸.

The first edition of ELIS was launched in 2013 by EUATC. For three years, it was just organised and run by EUATC alone. Over the years, more and more organi-

¹ <https://atc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/Dont-Hold-Your-Breath-Decisions-Await-The-UK-Language-Services-Market-in-2025.pdf>

² <https://euatc.org/>

³ <https://elia-association.org/>

⁴ <https://fit-europe.eu/>

⁵ <https://www.gala-global.org/>

⁶ https://translation.ec.europa.eu/get-involved-european-language-activities-and-initiatives/european-masters-translation_en

⁷ https://translation.ec.europa.eu/languages-and-translation-european-commission/language-industry-expert-group-lind_en

⁸ <https://womeninlocalization.com/>

sations have contributed to this survey. Thanks to the strong support from the European Commission's Directorate General for Translation (DGT),⁹ ELIA, GALA and the LIND expert group joined in 2016.

In the same year, the European Master's in Translation (EMT) network also got involved in the survey. This development was in recognition of the fact that cooperation between academia and the language industry is advantageous for both sides. EMT is a quality label awarded by the DGT to university translation programmes meeting specific quality standards. EMT recognises the importance of degree holders' employability and of a competence-based translation training, and therefore developed a competence framework in 2017, based on the 2009 EMT Wheel of Competences (updated in 2022).

FIT Europe became a partner for ELIS's 2017 edition. Women in Localization joined in 2021. This was also the first year that the acronym ELIS was used. Before that, the survey was simply named the European Language Industry Survey. Each ELIS report refers to the previous operating year, but indicates the year of publication in the title or edition. In this paper, year references always apply to the edition.

The survey covers market trends, expectations and concerns, challenges and obstacles for different target groups and more specifically independent language professionals, language companies, private and public language departments, university staff members and students. The last two groups are of particular interest for this paper, as students represent the new generation of language service providers and their upstream education determines their access to the market.

Participation in ELIS by training institutes and their students has varied somewhat in recent years. In 2025, it was slightly lower than in 2024. Nevertheless, especially when compared with trends in other segments of the survey, we can identify some significant data that suggest a paradigm shift.

The 2025 edition focused on the impact of AI on the language industry and paid particular attention to internship practices. Internships are an important step towards professional life for students and graduates, which is why currently some European initiatives aim at raising awareness of the needs of all internship stakeholders. This focus in ELIS 2025 certainly represents an important change in the perspective on study programmes, because it acknowledges the importance of the practical component. At the same time, ELIS 2025 made clear that AI is no longer seen by academia as a negative, marginal or even temporary phenomenon. In the medium term, this will also require changes or a shift in focus in programme design. As in previous editions, skill levels were also addressed.

1,322 participants from 50 countries responded to the 2025 edition of ELIS:

- 654 independent language professionals (77% female, 21% male)
- 179 language companies (50% female, 46% male)

⁹ https://commission.europa.eu/about/departments-and-executive-agencies/translation_en

- 71 language departments (82% female, 17% male)
- 137 university staff members (67% female, 31% male)
- 281 students (78% female, 17% male).

2.1. Methodology

The following analysis based on the 2025 ELIS survey also refers partly to the *ELIS 2024 Report* and comprises four sections.

The first deals with the popularity and usefulness of T&I programmes, while the second covers the perception of competence levels. The third section addresses the impact of AI on the language industry and academia from different angles, and the fourth details measures taken by academia to make future degree holders fit for market. This is followed by conclusions and suggestions for the future orientation of study programmes based on the paradigm shifts highlighted by ELIS in certain areas.

The student segment contained 26 core questions, while the teacher or EMT segment comprised 32 questions. Single-select questions were used to obtain the basic data that enabled assignment to country, type of programme, gender, etc. In this context, there was a certain imbalance in the distribution of countries, which could mean that some conclusions may only apply partially or not at all to certain countries. The survey included open and closed questions. Within the closed questions, there were multiselect questions where respondents could choose one or more options. For some other questions, the survey used a matrix format with a rating scale. For example, for competences, the options were basic, independent, proficient and don't know. For the use of tools in programmes, the options were implemented, planned, not planned, don't know. For some other questions, respondents could choose one or more options from a list to create a ranking of preferences or scales.

Some data were compared with those from previous ELIS editions to identify trends. Other data were compared with those from other segments of the 2025 survey to identify differences in perception between students, trainers and language professionals. For some other questions, the five-point Likert scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree was used, rating the level of agreement or disagreement with a series of statements. This approach was primarily adopted for questions relating to subjective emotional states, such as satisfaction with the degree programme. For the qualitative analysis of the open questions—mainly in response to the request “please specify”—themes were identified by keywords and divided into categories that are suitable for more general statements.

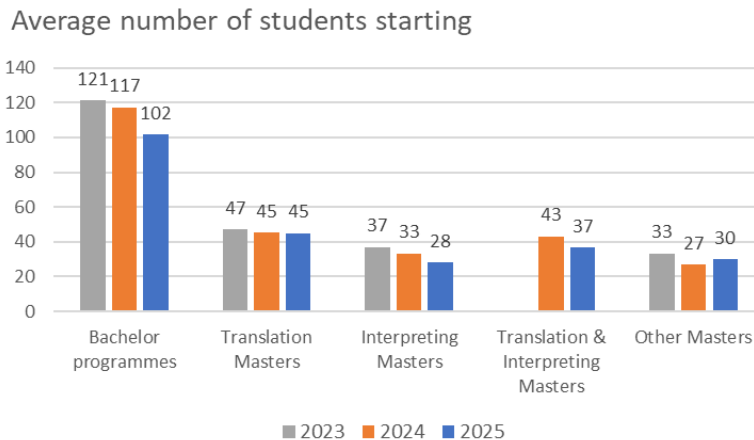
The survey was distributed and promoted via EUATC, ELIA, FIT Europe, GALA, the DGT, LIND, Women in Localization, various national professional associations for interpreters and translators, the EMT-network, academic Erasmus+ contacts and social media platforms such as LinkedIn. It was open for one month in early 2025. The data analysis was carried out under the coordination of Rudy Tirry, Head

of Research for ELIS, and one expert from each field: Rudy Tirry (former Country Manager for Lionbridge Belgium and General Manager of LQS, Lionbridge's global quality evaluation department and former President of EUATC), John O'Shea (Chairperson of FIT Europe), Diego Cresceri (LIND member, former ELIA president and board member, and translation company owner) and Alexandra Krause (University of Vienna trainer and EMT board member). The main 2025 results were presented to a larger public in a Translating Europe Workshop webinar on 18 March 2025, available on YouTube.¹⁰ The full *ELIS 2025 Report* is available on the European Commission's Knowledge Centre on Translation and Interpretation (KCTI) website.¹¹

3. Are translation and interpreting programmes still attractive to students?

It is often argued that T&I programmes no longer make sense, that graduates have no career opportunities because AI will take over all tasks in the field. Dwindling student numbers seem to reflect this belief. Together with budget cuts, this is a cause for concern in academia. However, the data from ELIS 2025 paint a more nuanced picture. Figure 1 shows the average numbers of students starting in 2023, 2024 and 2025 for different types of T&I programmes.

Figure 1
Average number of students starting (ELIS 2025 Report, Figure 33)



The decline in the number of first-year students is most evident in bachelor's programmes. It should be noted that only the enrolment figures for master's programmes

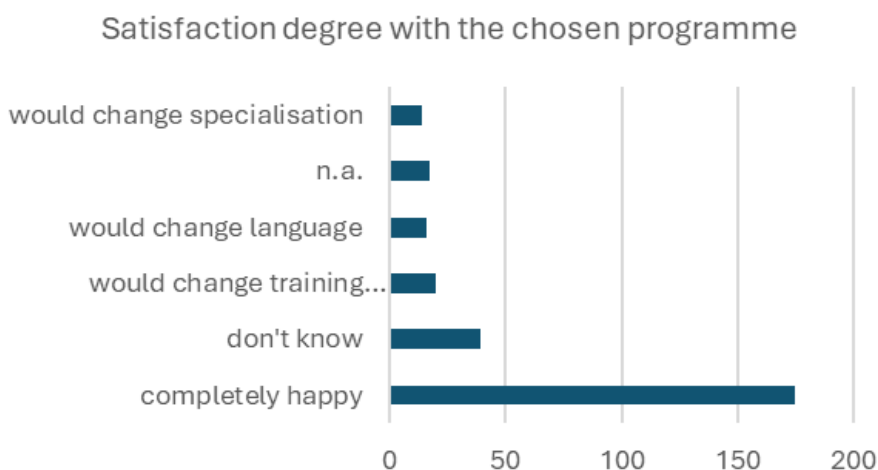
¹⁰ https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S4oHs_IXMno

¹¹ <https://knowledge-centre-translation-interpretation.ec.europa.eu/en/news/newest-elis-report-here>

provide relatively meaningful data. Even though the European Commission, for example, also invites bachelor's degree graduates to take the admission test for translator positions, it appears that highly qualified master's degree graduates have better job prospects. In recent years, a noticeable trend towards programme and/or career changers and people returning to education, enrolling in the master's programme in T&I has been observed in some programmes by experts such as study directors. To obtain a more accurate picture of the popularity of programmes relating to language service provider careers, statistics would also be needed on those bachelor's degree graduates in philology or other subjects who subsequently choose a T&I programme for their master's degree. The ELIS 2025 results also show that combined master's programmes and separate terminology programmes have seen the sharpest decline, while pure master's programmes reported stable student numbers. 53% of the programmes offer technology-driven translation programmes that do not seem to be so popular among students (see also page 45 of the *ELIS 2025 Report*). From this, we may infer that flexible master's programmes urgently need to be promoted, especially in the context of technology.

But what do the students themselves think about their choice of study programme when answering the question 'Are you still happy with the programme/specialisation/language choices that you made?' Figure 2 shows the students' satisfaction degree with their programme choice.

Figure 2
Satisfaction degree with the chosen programme (n = 281)



More than 62% are happy with their programme/specialisation/language choices. From the analysis of the open comments related to the question, it emerges that the main reasons for a certain dissatisfaction with the choice of degree course are the limited range of languages and, in some cases, specialisations offered.

In order to assess the appeal of the various language service provider job profiles, it is also important to ask in which professional field students see themselves working in the future. The categories available for selection did not target specific job profiles, but rather employment categories.

Students could choose from the following options:

- Language company – language position
- Language company – non-language position
- Non-language company – language position
- Non-language company – non-language position
- Public administration – language position
- Public administration – non-language position
- Freelance language professional
- Create my own company
- Other

Students could tick the following boxes:

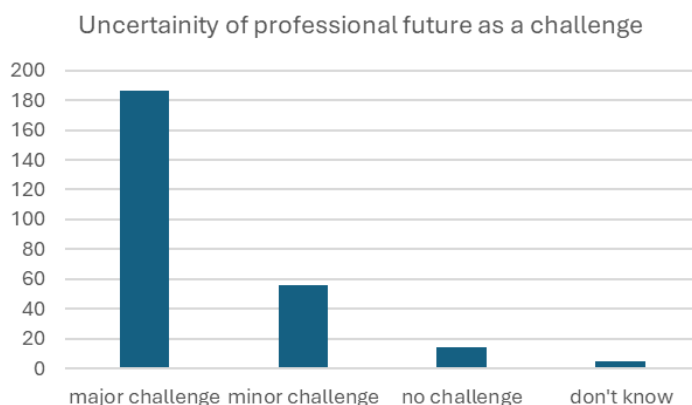
- preferred
- considered
- don't know
- not an option

From the statistical analysis of all these options and of the open-ended answers, it emerges that future degree holders clearly prefer language positions to non-language positions, which is to be expected. The two options 'preferred' and 'considered' were combined for this purpose. What was even more surprising was that 30% of the respondents want to become freelancers and 42% are considering working as freelancers. This means that almost three quarters of respondents have a positive attitude towards freelancing. And as many as 11% would like to start their own company, while another 23% could imagine doing so. This means that a total of 34% of respondents could gravitate towards self-employment as service providers.

These data can be interpreted in different ways: young graduates may value work-life balance and therefore prefer to maintain a degree of freedom in how they manage their (working) time. Alternatively, they may possess the courage to start their own business. In any case, this means that they want to work in the language industry and do not consider it to be without potential.

However, students are also realistic and informed enough to recognise that the language service provision market is in flux and fraught with uncertainty. This is confirmed by the fact that 66% of respondents chose the option 'major challenge' when it came to ranking the uncertainty of professional future as a challenge for their studies. Figure 3 shows the number of answers for each option to this question.

Figure 3
Uncertainty of professional future as a challenge for students (n = 261)



This uncertainty factor is also confirmed by trends among professionals already working in the field. Pym and Macreadie (2024) surveyed more than 2,000 translators and interpreters in Australia and found that about one-third of language professionals are likely to leave the sector. However, the age distribution showed that most professionals who were likely to leave their jobs were between 40 and 49 years old, while the percentage was not as high among younger and older professionals, who were far less likely to want to leave the profession.

4. Competence awareness

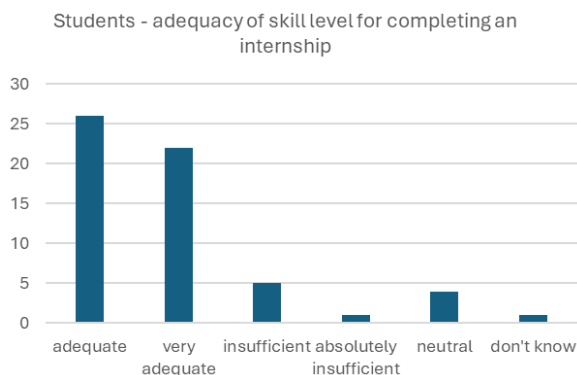
The level of competence is one of the core issues in any training programme and forms the basis for graduates' employability. Therefore, since 2016, ELIS has devoted a good number of questions to this topic in the individual segments and put them from different perspectives.

One set of questions aimed to find out the skill levels trainers think that employers in the language industry are likely to expect from a typical master's graduate. Another set of questions tackling the same skill categories aimed to find out the skill level trainers think that typical master's graduates actually possess. Within the student segment, students were asked whether they believed they had a sufficient skill level to complete the internship and which skill levels they think they should have upon graduation. Furthermore, independent language professionals, language companies, private and public language departments were asked if the performance of degree holders met their expectations.

The student question regarding the adequate skill level for completing an internship was formulated as follows: 'Do you agree with the following statements regard-

ing your internship? My skills are sufficiently developed to start a successful internship.’ For reasons of clarity, the answers have been reworded in Figure 4 to show how students feel about the adequacy of their skill levels for completing an internship. Adding together the two answers ‘very adequate’ and ‘adequate’, the positive feeling towards their own skill levels reaches a very high percentage, i.e. 81%.

Figure 4
Adequacy of skills for completing an internship – student perspective (n =59)



In other items addressing skill levels, questions were asked about the following skill categories, which refer directly to the EMT Competence Framework 2022: cultural awareness, digital literacy, information management, interpersonal skills, market expectations, project management skills, professional ethics, source language skills, target language skills, translation competence, translation technology. One set of questions targeted the skill levels that fresh master’s degree holders should have. For students, the question was: ‘Please indicate the skill level that you expect to reach when graduating from your training programme’, while in the trainer segment the question was: ‘Please indicate the skill levels that employers in the language industry are likely to expect from a typical Master’s graduate.’ The same skill categories were used for the following question in the trainer segment: ‘Please indicate the skill levels that your typical Master’s graduate possesses’. The categories mentioned above were also used for the language service company (LSC) segment and the other language industry segments where respondents were asked to answer the following question: ‘Based on your experience with recent graduates with a translation-related Master’s degree, how would you define their skill level?’.

Even though there is obviously a gap between the skill level during studies, i.e. when completing an internship, and at the end of the study course, it is becoming clear that students’ perceptions differ somewhat from those of future employers at any stage of the study course. Students seem to expect to have a much higher skill level at the end of their study course than employers perceive in them. Figure 5 shows only the two response options ‘advanced’ and ‘average’ in the student segment for this question.

Figure 5
Expected skill levels upon graduation – student perspective (n = 281)

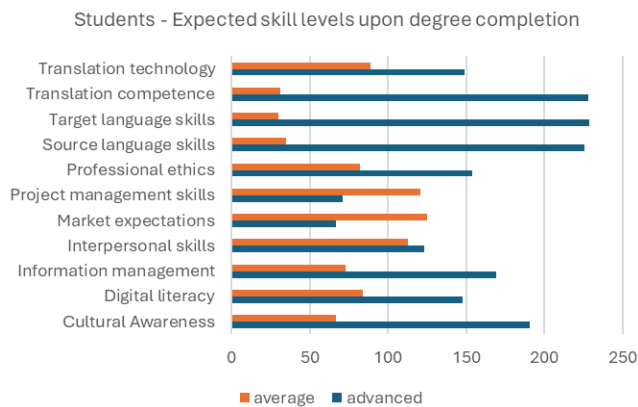


Figure 6 shows only the two response options ‘advanced’ and ‘average’ for the degree holders’ skills observed by LSCs. These skill levels may be considered positive and can be correlated with the majority of students' positive assessment of their skill levels during the internship and upon graduation. The LSC segment was deliberately chosen as a comparison example because it includes more respondents than the language departments segment and because independent language professionals are less likely to hire fresh degree holders than LSCs. Figure 7 shows to what extent LSCs rate the degree holders’ skills mentioned above positively, thereby enabling a ranking of these skills. The analysis shows that only in a few categories, i.e. source language skills, target language skills, translation skills, interpersonal and project management skills, are the skills of degree holders rated positively by more than 50% of the LSC respondents.

Figure 6
Observed skill level degree holders – LSC segment (n = 179)

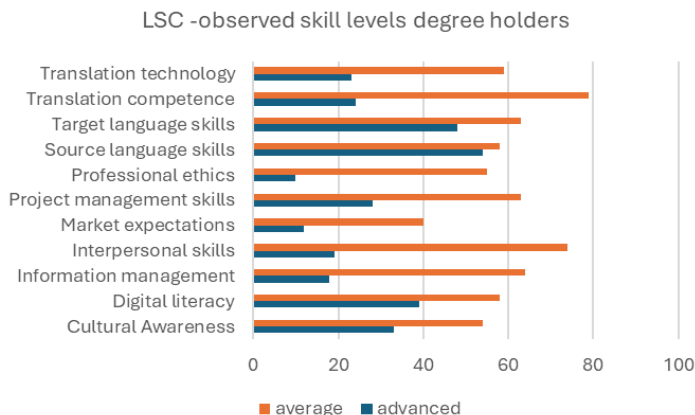
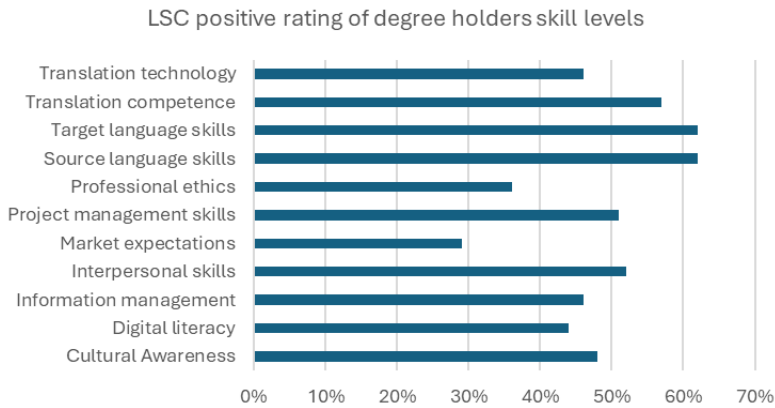
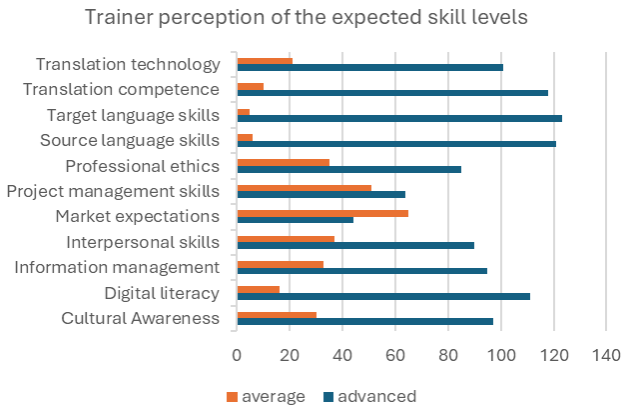


Figure 7
Positive rating of degree holders' skill levels – LSC segment (n = 179)



A comparison of the same skill categories for the following question in the trainer segment ‘Please indicate the skill levels that employers in the language industry are likely to expect from a typical Master’s graduate.’—using also only the responses ‘advanced’ and ‘average’ (as shown in Figure 8)—, shows that the trainers’ perception is close to the LSC reality.

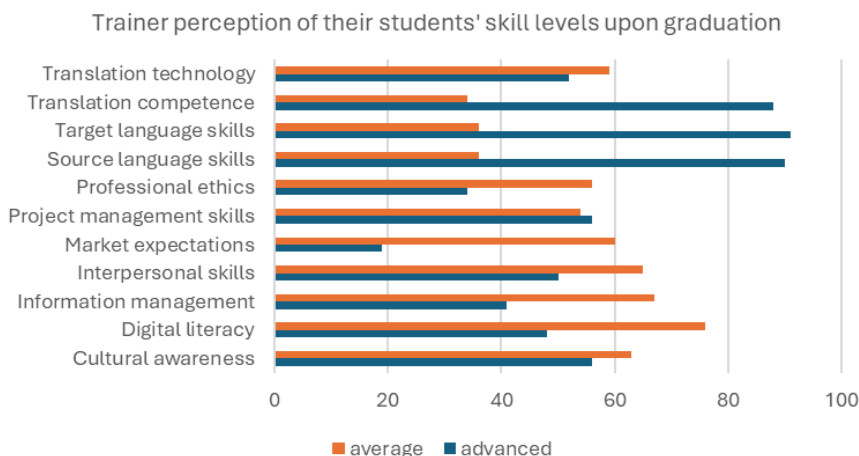
Figure 8
Trainer perception of the expected skill levels (n = 132)



However, the answers to the question ‘Please indicate the skill levels that your typical Master’s graduate possesses’ in the trainer segment, as shown in Figure 9, indicate that trainers have a more realistic view than their students when it comes to the skill levels actually achieved upon graduation. The gap between student expectations and trainer perception can also be seen as an indicator that the programmes do not meet student expectations. It could also indicate that student expectations are unrealistic,

considering that ‘Market expectations’ are the skill rated lowest by the LSCs (see also Figure 7). That means that students cannot make a realistic assessment of their own skill levels in relation to employer expectations.

Figure 9
Trainer perception of their students’ skill levels upon graduation (n = 132)

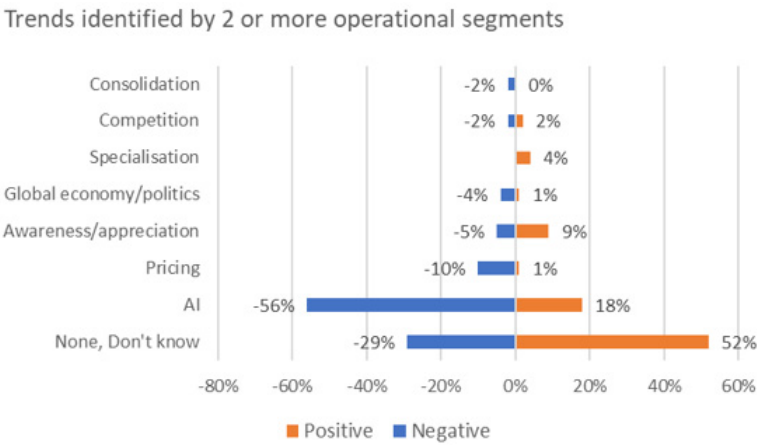


All data on expected and actual skill levels show that areas directly related to the working world and to technology are rated lower than others. Skills that have long been part of traditional training in the T&I sector, such as language or translation skills, are rated higher.

5. The impact of AI

Nowadays, the impact of AI can be seen in almost all areas of the economy. Language service provision is no exception. Many customers and end users who employ AI in their daily lives and are satisfied with it assume that AI can also be used without difficulty or risks for very specific tasks such as technical translations. Even though AI is developing very rapidly and there are significant differences in the quality of automatic translation and interpreting depending on the language combination, it seemed useful to ask both trainers and students for their opinion on general trends in the language industry and more specifically on the impact of AI on T&I at the time of the survey, i.e. in January 2025. A comparison between the negative and positive trends identified by two or more operational segments, as shown in Figure 10 taken from the *ELIS 2025 Report*, indicates that AI is perceived negatively within the current trends by most independent language professionals, language companies and language departments.

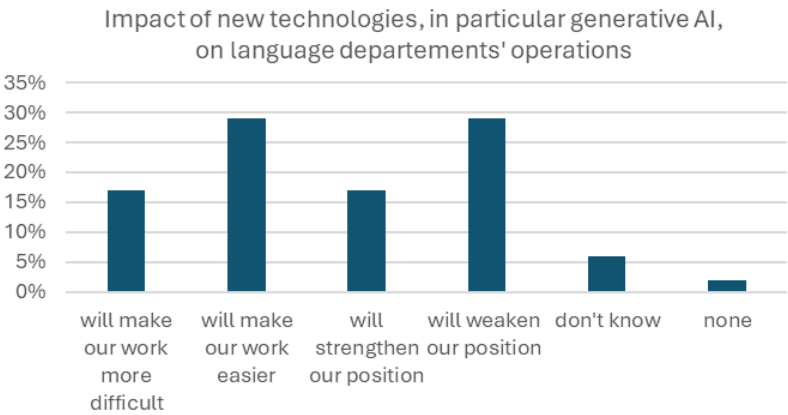
Figure 10
Trends identified by two or more operational segments (ELIS 2025 Report, Figure 39)



Only 10% of independent language professionals used generative AI regularly in 2024, 8% used it occasionally, while 82% did not use generative AI at all.

However, it emerges from some segments and from the open-ended questions linked to AI that these groups have a somewhat ambivalent attitude towards AI. Language departments state that AI will make their work easier, but at the same time, they fear that AI will weaken their position, as shown in Figure 11.

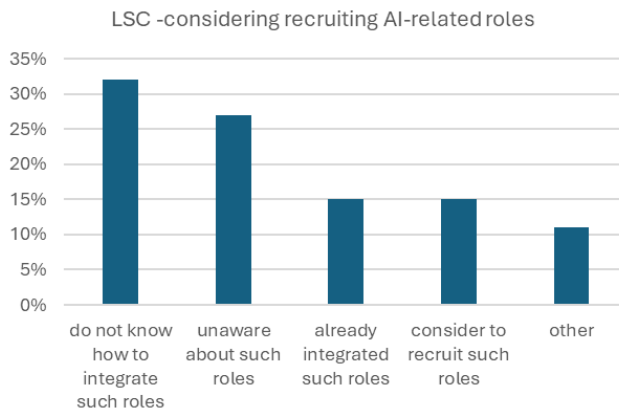
Figure 11
Impact of new technologies, in particular generative AI,
on language departments' operations (n = 109)



The main concerns in all three groups of language professionals relate to quality, pricing and the image of the profession, or more in general, the appreciation of the service in question.

Scepticism towards AI is also evidenced by the answers to the question, ‘Have new AI-related roles such as Conversational AI Designer, Prompt Engineer, or others emerged in your company?’ Figure 12 shows the percentages of LSCs’ responses for the various answers given as options for this question.

Figure 12
Considering recruiting AI-related roles – LSC segment (n = 170)



Only a few companies elaborated on their position regarding these new profiles. Some stated that they do not know how to deal with them, while others stated that they have no plans to hire professionals in this field. The company’s size and the lack of funding were also an issue mentioned by LSCs in this context. Some indicated that they are outsourcing AI-related tasks to external specialists.

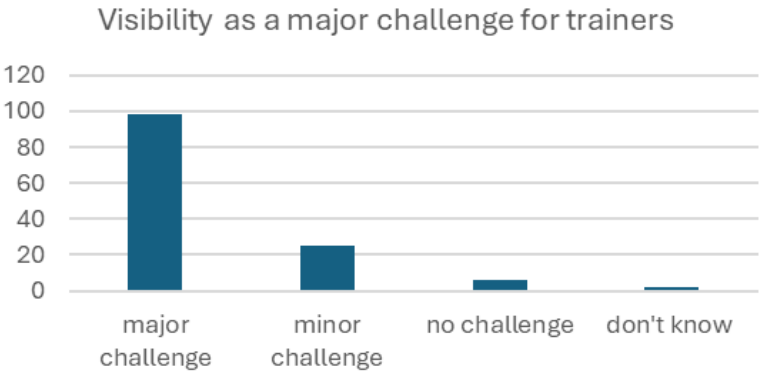
From an analysis of the open-ended question in the trainer segment ‘What language industry trends do you expect may have a positive impact for the language industry in 2025?’, it emerges that trainers see the most effective positive trends coming from AI and all its applications. To them, awareness of the advantages and limitations of AI could become a positive factor. Humans in the loop or more correctly, at the steering wheel, are also considered key factors in the industry’s success. Fostering specialisation and accessibility is also mentioned as providing a positive boost. Some of the respondents think that the demand for *professional* services will increase because of the limits of AI tools and the popularisation of translation and interpreting. Openness to new job profiles, quality and data management were also addressed in the open-ended answers.

The opposite open-ended question in the trainer segment was ‘What language industry trends do you expect may have a negative impact for the language industry in 2025?’. According to the trainers, all negative impacts are in one way or the other linked to generative AI. This result shows a similar ambivalence towards AI as we saw in the language providers’ segments. The concerns also raised in the trainer segment range from quality and pricing to ethical aspects like copyright and blind

trust in AI tools. These results are fully in line with the concerns expressed by the segments mentioned above.

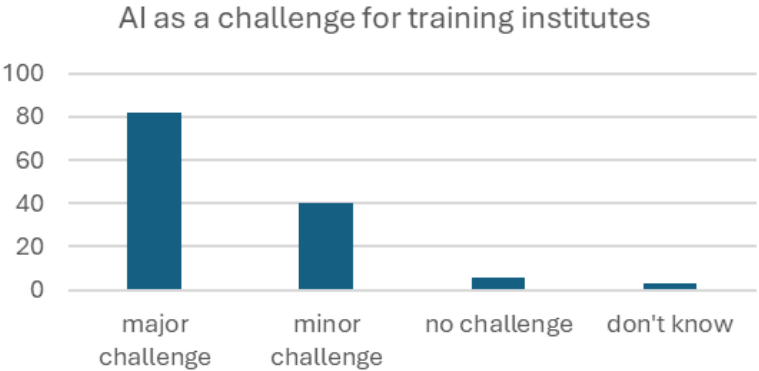
Many of those concerns correlate directly with the visibility of the profession. To the question ‘What do you consider to be the main challenges for your training institute?’ 75% of all trainers responded that to them, visibility is a major challenge, as shown in Figure 13.

Figure 13
Visibility as a major challenge for trainers (n = 130)



Regarding the challenge posed by the impact and use of generative AI, 63% of academic respondents consider AI as a major challenge for their training institutes, while 35%—adding the ‘minor challenge’ and ‘no challenge’ options together—seem to have integrated generative AI into their programmes without any problems, as shown in Figure 14. These values have changed since the ELIS survey conducted in 2024 (see also page 41 of the *ELIS 2024 Report*), which suggests that generative AI is gradually finding its way into training institutes, even if its use still poses a challenge for the majority.

Figure 14
AI as a challenge for training institutes (n = 130)



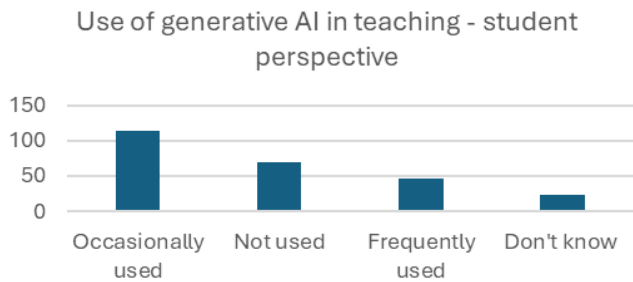
Students' opinions on AI are particularly important in this context because they show, on the one hand, the extent to which individual training institutes have already integrated AI into their teaching and, on the other, how much students themselves regard AI as a threat or a helpful tool for their future careers.

The comparison between the trainers' perception of AI as a challenge and the students' perception of it shows that students seem to be much more at ease with AI than their trainers. Even though it is not entirely clear whether students, when answering the question, were thinking about the use of AI in their future careers and the corresponding preparation for this, or rather as an (unauthorised) aid in solving tasks and exams during their studies, clear differences between the two groups are apparent. Compared to the share of trainers who think that generative AI could be a major challenge (63%), only 38% of the student respondents answered that dealing with AI is a major challenge to them. Adding the options 'minor challenge' and 'no challenge' ticked by student respondents, the percentage even reaches 59% compared to 35% within the trainer group of respondents.

The student questionnaire also included an open-ended question that allowed respondents to describe their position towards generative AI in T&I in more detail. As expected, there is high degree of concern about the job situation, competitiveness, translation quality and the reliability of AI-generated translations. But there is also an awareness of new job prospects, that human input is essential and that translators will in the future work in the premium segment, which will set itself apart from AI-generated translation. This means that students are generally on the same page as language service providers and trainers.

The question 'How is technology integrated in your training programme: Generative AI' brought up some revealing student answers. 28% of students state that generative AI is not used in teaching, while only 19% state that it is frequently used and 44% state that it is occasionally used. This means that just over 50% confirm that generative AI is used in teaching. Figure 15 shows absolute respondent numbers to this question. These figures are likely to increase in the near future, as more and more study programmes are establishing precise rules for the use of generative AI in teaching. Once uncertainties regarding the assessment of work produced with the help of generative AI have been resolved, trainers will increasingly use AI in teaching. The same applies to rules on intellectual property and other issues related to generative AI.

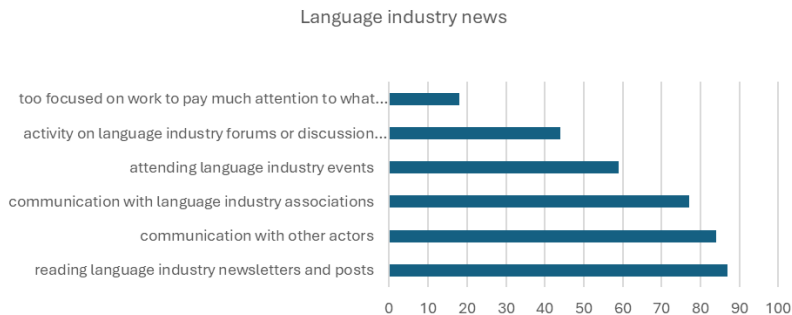
Figure 15
Integration of AI in teaching – student perspective (n = 254)



6. Fit for market?

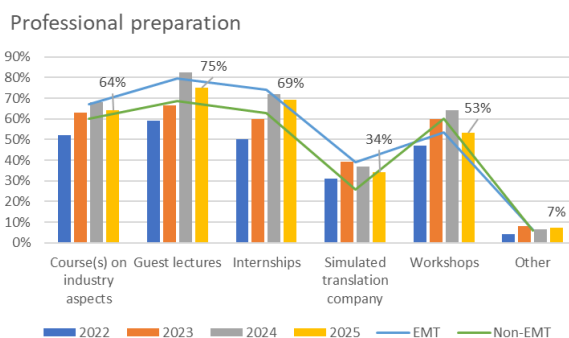
Awareness of the language industry and its trends among trainers and researchers is one of the prerequisites for ensuring that students are well informed about the language industry and can later successfully enter the language market. This aspect has largely improved between ELIS 2024 and ELIS 2025, with industry newsletters and posts at the top, followed closely by communication with other actors in the industry and information through language industry associations, as shown in Figure 16. A lower percentage of academic respondents is attending language industry events and is active on language industry forums or in discussion groups. But there is also a share of respondents who are still too focused on their own work to pay much attention to what is going on in the language industry. It should be noted that multiple answers to this question were possible and that some academics who stated that they were too focused on work to pay much attention to what is going on in the language industry also indicated that they communicate with other actors. Therefore, this overall positive trend might be considered an important shift in the perception that academics have of the language industry.

Figure 16
How academics gather information about language industry news (n = 137)



Preparation for the market is closely linked to this awareness. Study programmes use various methods to prepare their students for the realities of working life. These range from courses on industry aspects, guest lectures by professionals etc. to internships. In 2025, a slight decline in all professionalisation measures was reported by academic respondents. Figure 17, taken from the *ELIS 2025 Report*, shows the trend in professionalisation measures between 2022 and 2025, differentiated between EMT programmes and non-EMT programmes, as reported by teachers.

Figure 17
Professionalisation measures (ELIS 2025 Report, Figure 111)



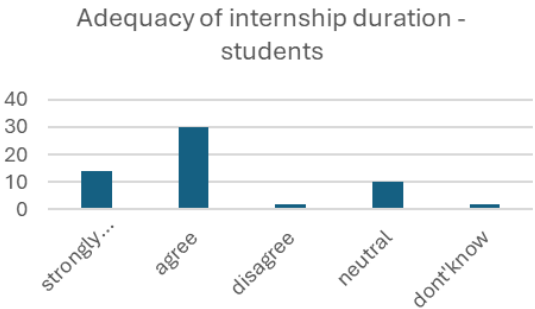
This may be due to the slightly lower number of students and the resulting reduction in the number of courses offered, but also to the rather difficult economic situation in the language industry, where language service providers are increasingly focusing on their core business and cannot devote much time to additional training activities for students, such as workshops etc.

In any case, internships have proven to be the second most important way to get professional experience. The realisation that professionalisation is mainly founded on practical experience has led to internships becoming an integral part of master's programmes. The results of an internal survey among EMT programmes show that, depending on the legal constraints and the different programme designs, internships are today often mandatory and institutionally embedded.

There are major differences in internship duration and this may be due to programme-inherent aspects such as the one-year or two-year duration of the master's degree, as well as national university requirements. There is a slight difference between domestic and international internships. However, it emerges clearly from the data that the most popular duration for both types, domestic and international, is 12 weeks, which even exceeds the minimum allowable duration of two months required by many national Erasmus bureaus. Internships lasting more than 12 weeks were only reported in very few cases, with the exception of one programme that combines periods of teaching with internships. A duration of four and six weeks has also been given by different programmes, with domestic internships more frequently being of this duration.

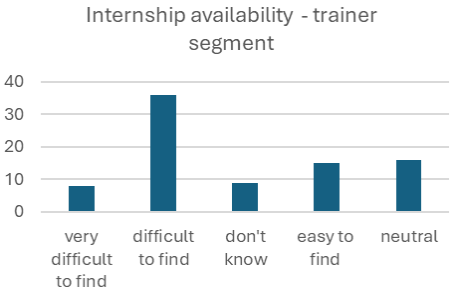
It was interesting to observe how students perceive internship duration, as shown in Figure 18 by absolute respondent numbers. Although only a small percentage of students ($n = 58$, 22%) responded to the question of whether they perceived internship duration as adequate, 44 (75%) felt that it was a good or very good fit. The low response rate is due to the fact that only 64 students (23%) of the 281 student respondents had started or completed an internship, and 174 (62%) did not have any internship by January 2025. Furthermore, 43 (15%) stated that an internship is not part of their (BA) training programme. Some of the 64 students who had completed an internship did not answer some of the questions relating to internships. Therefore, the internship data collected via the student segment of ELIS 2025 can only be regarded as indicators from a statistical point of view.

Figure 18
Adequacy of internship duration – student perspective (n = 58)



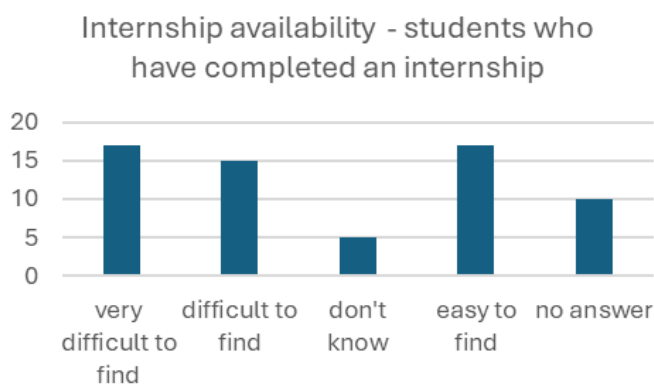
From ELIS 2025, it became clear that the availability of internships and how they are organised were the biggest challenges for students and internship coordinators in study programmes. One of the questions in the trainer segment was: ‘Do you agree with the following statements regarding internships? It is easy to find adequate internship opportunities for all students.’. Figure 19 shows how trainers feel about finding an internship placement for their students.

Figure 19
Internship availability – trainer segment (n = 84)



For reasons of clarity, the answers have been reworded in Figure 19. Originally, respondents indicated the degree of agreement or disagreement to the question above. Students seem to be slightly more confident in this regard. The equivalent question in the student segment was: ‘Do you agree with the following statements regarding your internship? It was easy to find an adequate internship.’ Figure 20 shows how students feel about finding an internship placement.

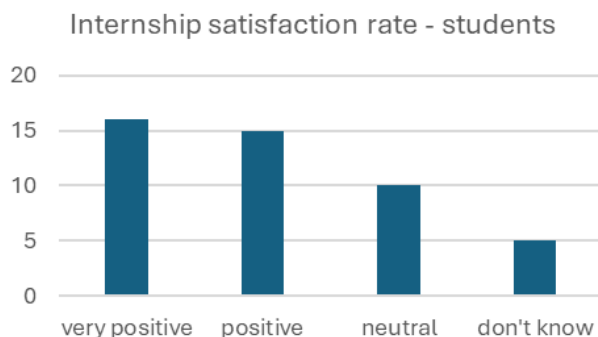
Figure 20
Internship availability – student perspective (n = 64)



For reasons of clarity, the answers have been reworded as shown in the figure above. Despite the small number of responses, it clearly emerges that the ratio between ‘very difficult internship search’ plus ‘difficult internship search’ to ‘easy internship search’ is approximately 2:1 for students, while it is 3:1 for trainers.

Another important aspect is the degree of student satisfaction with their internships, as shown in Figure 21. It can influence both their further course of study and their career choice and, in the worst case, lead to them dropping out of the programme. The data set for this question is, unfortunately, relatively small.

Figure 21
Internship satisfaction rate – student perspective (n = 46)



Taken together, the very positive (35%) and positive experiences (33%) produce a very encouraging result.

Equally important for choosing a career in T&I are the market knowledge and awareness that students have. These two aspects are also positively influenced by completing internships. ELIS 2025 clearly demonstrated higher industry awareness scores for students that did an internship. Students with internship experience expressed language market opinions that are much more in line with those of the industry players than students without such experience, which allows them to make more informed decisions about their professional future (ELIS 2025: 49).

Overall, further research on the topic of internships seemed necessary. For this purpose, a large-scale survey on raising awareness of the needs of internship stakeholders was conducted in 2025 under the auspices of the European Commission's DGT, involving EMT programmes and the DGT's LIND group.

7. Conclusions for translation didactics

The ELIS 2025 Report and the analyses described in this paper indicate that the language industry is experiencing an ongoing paradigm shift.

2024 has brought confirmation of the fears that language companies and independent professionals already expressed in the two previous editions of ELIS.

The downward trend for both actuals and expectations continues, not only for the participants' own activities but also for the market at large.

While third party market research indicates that larger language companies manage to control the damage, structural changes in the industry are wreaking havoc among small language companies and freelancers and force them to rethink their activities. (ELIS 2025: 13)

It is not only small languages companies and freelancers who need to rethink their attitude; training institutes must also take note of this paradigm shift and introduce appropriate changes.

First and foremost, the technological gap between training and practice must be bridged. It is true that the data from ELIS 2025 were better than those from 2024 in this skills area and that technology skills expectations vary significantly among employers, depending on their own size and structure. Nevertheless, employers' satisfaction rate is still relatively low. Similar values can be observed in the areas of project management skills and interpersonal skills, while areas such as professional ethics and market expectations rank much lower. Professional ethics in particular is an issue that can be addressed effectively in an academic setting. However, it has become apparent that insufficient emphasis is placed on this topic in training

programmes. In this context, subjects such as intellectual property, data protection, deep fakes, etc., as well as the relevant legal basis in different countries, must be addressed in separate courses.

In some areas, mainly ‘market expectations’, it could be argued that only concrete practical experience within the context of internships or simulated assignments, for example, can improve these skills. This highlights the importance of sufficiently long and intensive internships. Close cooperation between academia and industry and a well-organised internship programme, in which supervision and feedback for all parties are paramount, are therefore extremely important.

LSCs have begun to acknowledge the changes due to AI and are dealing hesitantly with new job profiles like prompt engineer, data engineer, computational linguist and conversational AI designer. These new job profiles could offer good job opportunities for future degree holders and may become increasingly important in the near future. They should therefore be given greater emphasis in study programmes.

As AI also appears to affect the visibility of the profession, training institutes in T&I need to teach their students how AI can be used in a positive way, where the dangers and problems of AI lie in language service provision, and what role humans will play in this process. At the same time, future degree holders could learn to act as multipliers in society, promoting the targeted interaction between AI and T&I.

As for the employability of degree holders, study programmes should closely monitor the market's recruitment policy. LSCs stated in ELIS 2025 that their companies were likely to recruit new staff in the following areas: multimedia, legal, H&R, finance, quality management, social media, engineering & development, marketing, project management, language data, AI, sales and vendor management, language (T&I). Figure 22 illustrates the ranking of the various specialist subjects specified by LSCs as recruitment areas.

Figure 22
Recruitment areas 2025 – LSC segment (n = 143)



This ranking not only highlights the importance of traditional training in T&I combined with AI and language data management. It also shows that marketing skills are increasingly in demand. Marketing courses, with a particular focus on the language industry, should therefore be integrated into T&I study programmes.

Based on all these observations, the introduction of combined degree programmes that blend traditional T&I training with content related to language technology, data generation and analysis appears to be a promising approach. Some European faculties have already introduced standard master's or advanced master's degrees in language technology, multilingual technology, language data management and similar fields. However, such degree programmes should become the standard in the field of T&I. This does not mean that language and cultural skills should be relegated to the background. They are, and will always be, the indispensable foundation of a solid T&I degree programme and must be regarded as a prerequisite to which other technological skills will be linked. The process should be based on language and culture as the foundation for technological training, not the other way around. Since curricular changes usually take a relatively long time and the market is developing very rapidly, advanced master's programmes seem to be a good option to address this problem. Furthermore, they would also reduce the complexity of a normal master's programme, which would otherwise need to cover all the above-mentioned content within one or two years. Moreover, they would send a signal to society that contrary to all assumptions and trends, T&I has become a highly specialised discipline that should be the domain of experts only.

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