GLD Professional Forum: From Hype to Hands-On: Real-World AI Adoption Among DE<>EN T&I Professionals

Facilitated by:
Karen Leube and Robin Limmeroth

Agenda

- **Introduction (5 min.)**

- **Collated survey results (10 min.)**

- **Breakout groups (15 min.)**

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- **Takeaways from breakout groups (10 min.)**

- **Wrap-up and conclusion (5 min.)**

While numerous webinars and sessions are available for learning how to use AI in our work as language professionals, this Professional Forum offers German Language Division members a unique opportunity to exchange real-world applications and experiences specific to the German<>English market.

Prior to the Conference, GLD members were invited to complete a survey covering their AI integration practices, workflow adaptations, and tool preferences, if any, as well as ethical considerations and client communication and education strategies. The survey also addressed potential alternative revenue streams.

Survey results

Feedback

Image: Pixabay

Q. 1: Years of Experience

Q1 How many years have you been working as a translator/interpreter/language service provider?

Answered: 57   Skipped: 0
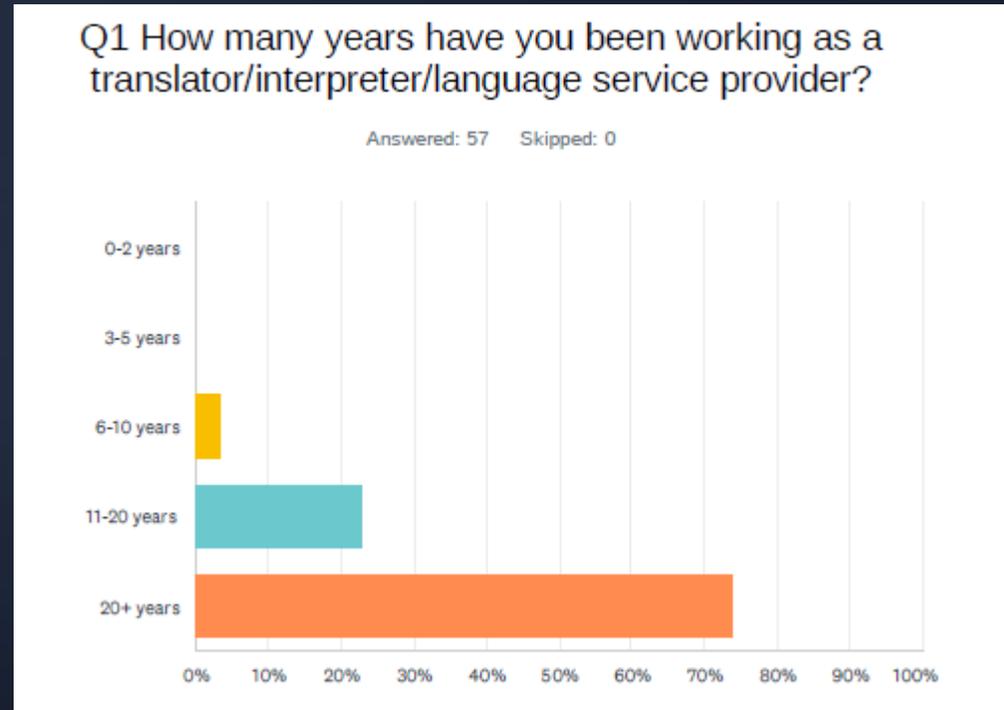
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0-2 years	0.00%	0
3-5 years	0.00%	0
6-10 years	3.51%	2
11-20 years	22.81%	13
20+ years	73.68%	42
TOTAL		57

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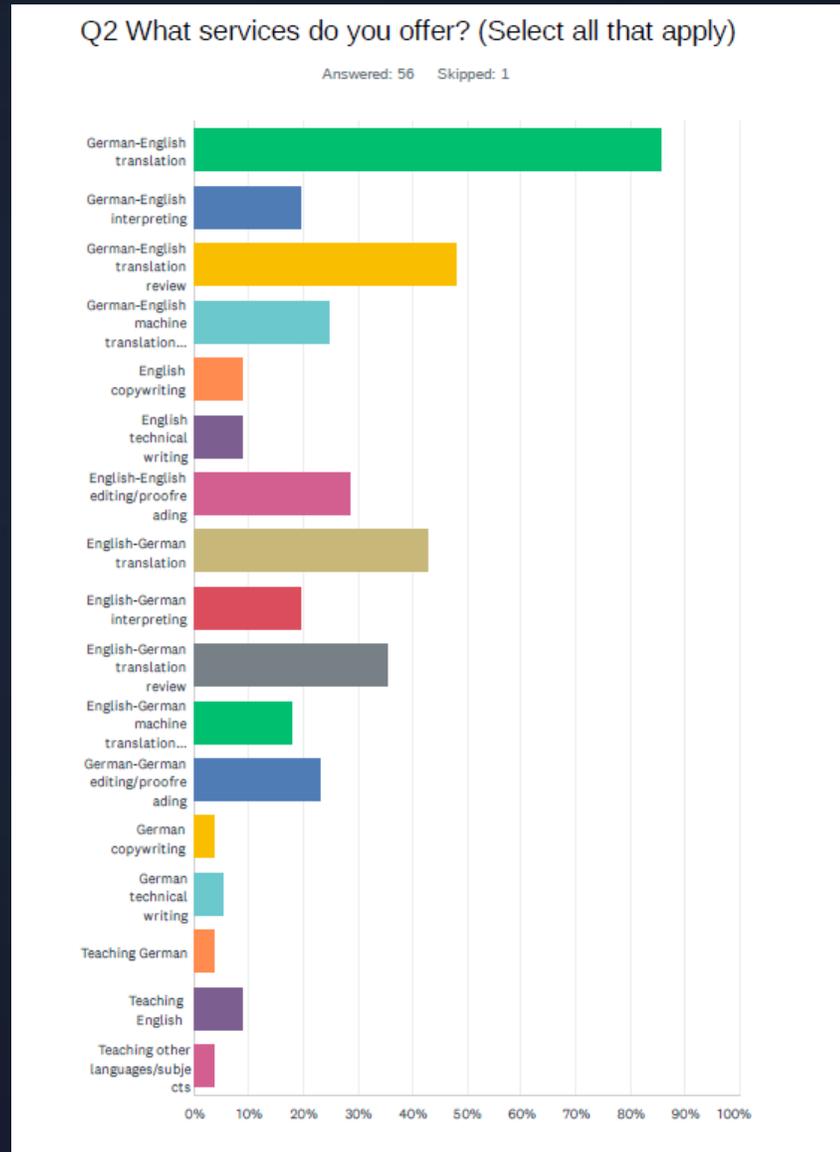**From Hype to Hands-On: Real-World AI Adoption Among DE<>EN T&I Professionals**

Q. 2: Service(s) offered (1)

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
German-English translation	85.71%	48
German-English interpreting	19.64%	11
German-English translation review	48.21%	27
German-English machine translation post editing (MTPE)	25.00%	14
English copywriting	8.93%	5
English technical writing	8.93%	5
English-English editing/proofreading	28.57%	16
English-German translation	42.86%	24
English-German interpreting	19.64%	11
English-German translation review	35.71%	20
English-German machine translation post editing (MTPE)	17.86%	10
German-German editing/proofreading	23.21%	13
German copywriting	3.57%	2
German technical writing	5.36%	3
Teaching German	3.57%	2
Teaching English	8.93%	5
Teaching other languages/subjects	3.57%	2
Total Respondents: 56		

Q2 What services do you offer? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 56   Skipped: 1

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Q. 2: Service(s) offered (2)

| #	OTHER (PLEASE DESCRIBE):
1	Transcription of Kurrent handwriting
2	German and English into Italian
3	English-German QA; English-German software localization
4	AI rater
5	English-German transcreation
6	Teaching French / French-German interpreting / German-French interpreting
7	translation, editing, review, MTPE in other languages
8	I also work with other languages
9	German-Spanish translation
10	German-English subtitling
11	Terminology

Q. 3: Respondent's field(s) of work

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Academic/Scholarly publications	19.30%	11
Advertising, Marketing & PR	24.56%	14
Arts & Entertainment	10.53%	6
Certified & Administrative	24.56%	14
Education and E-learning	8.77%	5
Financial	33.33%	19
Health, Medicine and/or Pharmaceutical	49.12%	28
Literary	8.77%	5
Legal	49.12%	28
Technical	42.11%	24
Total Respondents: 57		

Q3 Please tell us the field or fields you work in. (Select all that apply)

Answered: 57   Skipped: 0
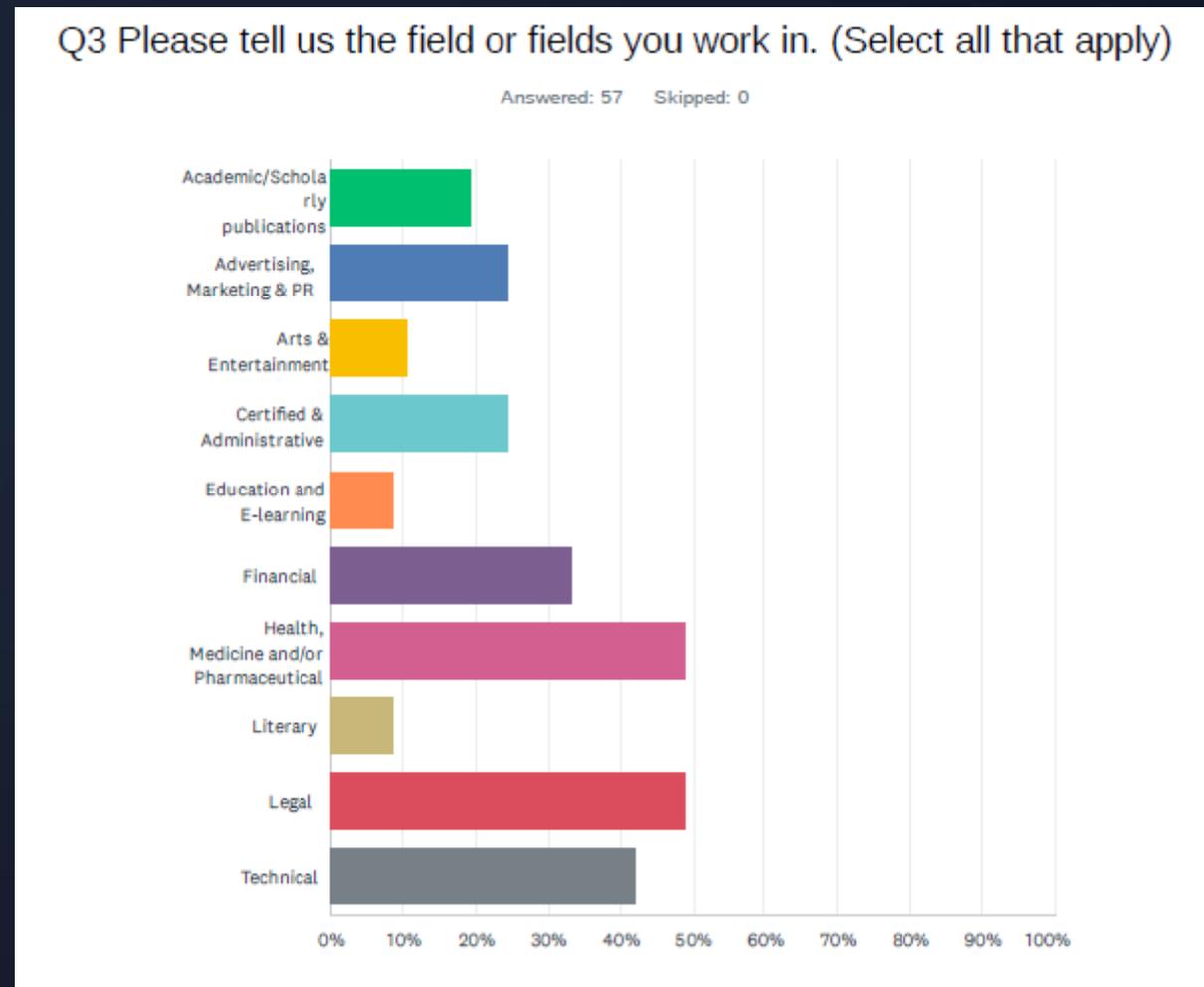
Other fields mentioned:
Patents (2), Business: interpreting at meetings at various levels, Community Interpreting, Language teaching for students of all sorts of the Bavarian school system, Language teaching at the VHS, Religion and Spirituality, Architecture, Sustainability

Q. 4: Current AI Tool Use/Non-Use

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes, regularly	29.82%	17
Yes, occasionally	15.79%	9
Yes, but rarely	8.77%	5
No, but I am considering it	14.04%	8
No, and I am not planning to	31.58%	18
TOTAL		57

Q4 Do you currently use AI tools in your translation work?

Answered: 57   Skipped: 0
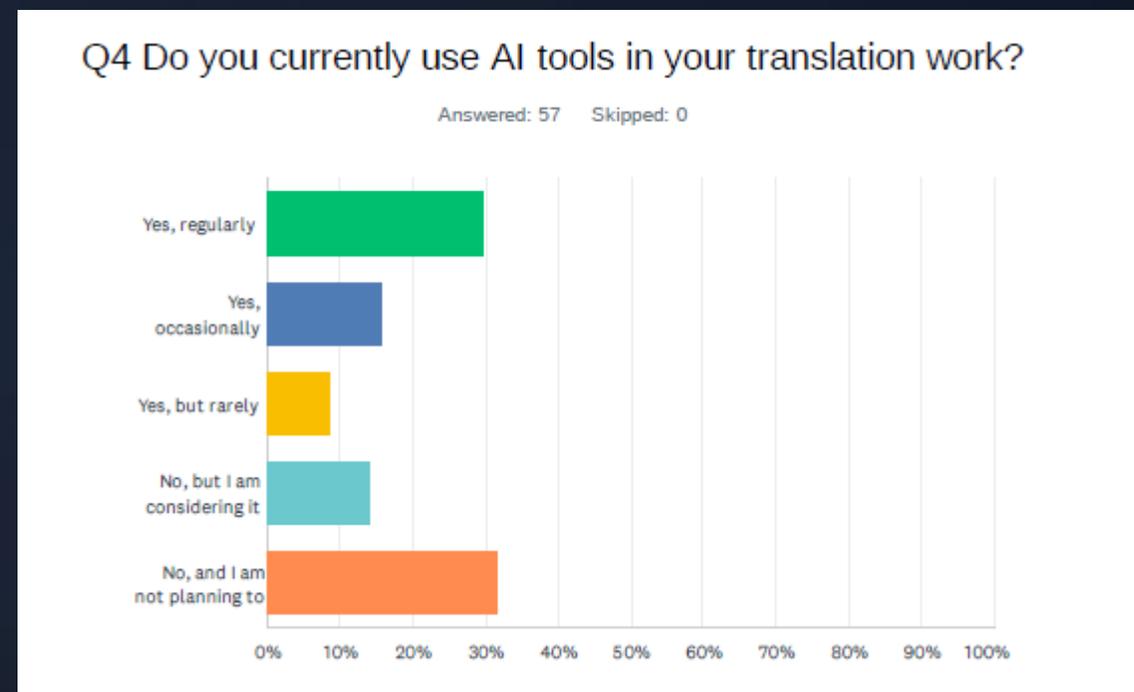
Q. 5: Percentage of Work Using AI

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0-25%	63.64%	35
26-50%	5.45%	3
51-75%	23.64%	13
76-100%	7.27%	4
TOTAL		55

Q5 For what percentage of your work do you currently use AI?

Answered: 55   Skipped: 2
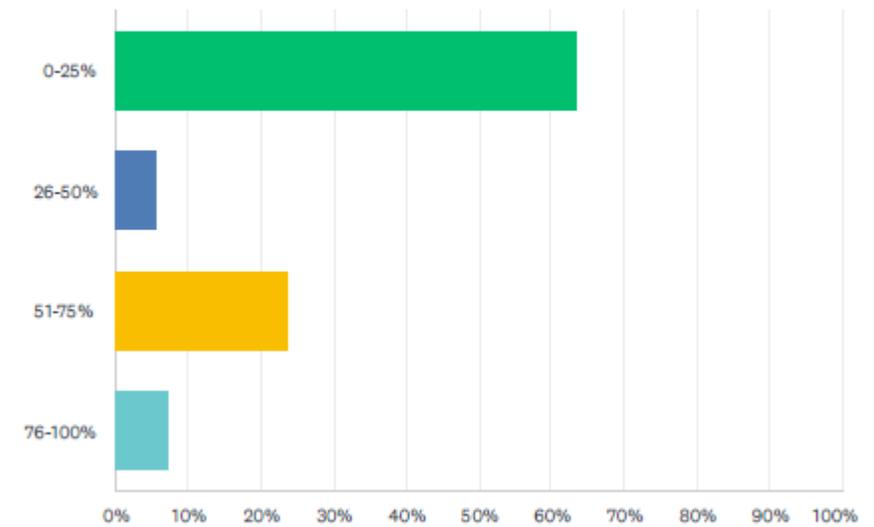
Q. 6: Use of Single/Multiple AI Tools

Q6 Do you use one AI tool exclusively or multiple tools?

Answered: 56   Skipped: 1
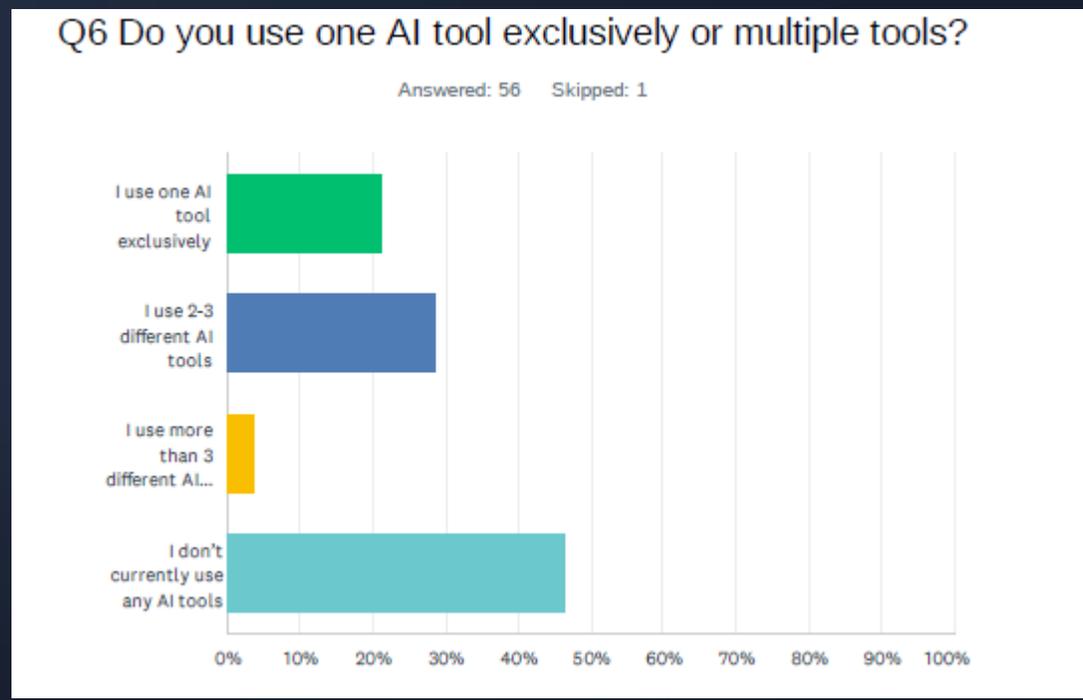
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I use one AI tool exclusively	21.43%	12
I use 2-3 different AI tools	28.57%	16
I use more than 3 different AI tools	3.57%	2
I don't currently use any AI tools	46.43%	26
TOTAL		56

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Q. 7: Multiple-Tool Approach

Q7 If you use multiple tools, what is your approach? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 19   Skipped: 38

#	OTHER:
1	n/a
2	I do not use these garbage tools. I see no value in first generating a gibberish 'translation' just so that I have to waste extra time fixing it. Better to do it properly in the first place.
3	From looking at some of the questions that follow, it is not clear what all you mean by "AI tool" if you include things like grammar checking or the AI crap thrown up by Google (unless specifically prevented). I purposely deactivate all AI "features" in Windows and MS Office on account of data leaks. That includes Copilot in Windows and the Translate and Dictation features in Office. I purposely removed Adobe because it wasn't clear whether the AI Assistant was deactivated even after tinkering with the Registry. Any analysis by Adobe or Microsoft for any of these purposes means a breach of NDA agreements because it means that content ends up in their hands.
4	Due to confidentiality concerns, I use AI only if I cannot find a translation for a term to find more search ideas. Otherwise, I find AI to unreliable in my field.

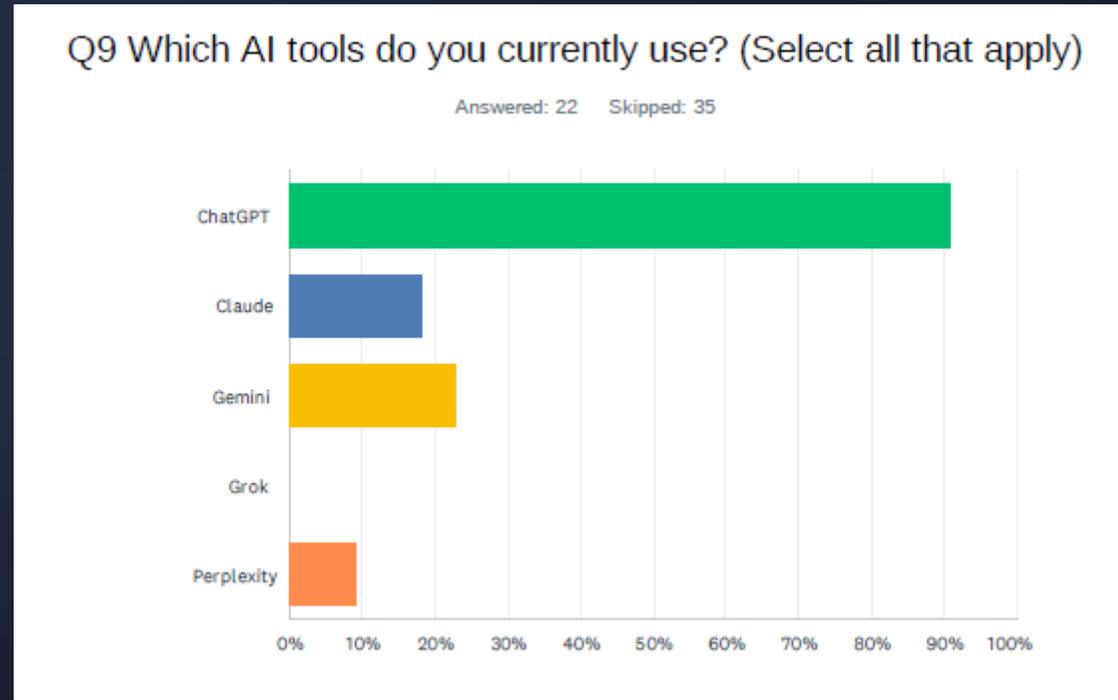| ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I use different tools for different tasks (for example, one for translation, another for editing)	42.11%	8
I use different tools for different subject areas/specializations	15.79%	3
I compare outputs from multiple tools for the same task	47.37%	9
I use backup tools when my primary tool is unavailable	15.79%	3
I experiment with different tools to find the best solution for my task	26.32%	5
Total Respondents: 19		

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Q. 8: AI Tasks (1)

Q. 8: AI Tasks (2)

#	OTHER:
1	n/a
2	Sparring partner with creative translations
3	See previous answer
4	If I get stuck on a phrase and can't think of a good way to translate it, I'll "brainstorm" using DeepL and/or ChatGPT (depending on how confidential it is - I have an NDA and AVV with DeepL, but not with ChatGPT). So I use it for an initial draft translation, but not for everything, just for certain parts.
5	None of the above for the reasons given above. I take confidentiality seriously.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Initial draft translation	45.16%	14
Post-editing machine translation	29.03%	9
Terminology research	67.74%	21
Topic research	58.06%	18
Style and tone refinement	35.48%	11
Grammar check	32.26%	10
Cultural adaptation suggestions	19.35%	6
Proofreading/quality assurance	25.81%	8
Client communication drafts	9.68%	3
Administrative tasks	12.90%	4
Preparing language lessons	3.23%	1
Total Respondents: 31		

Q. 9: AI Tools Used (1)

Q9 Which AI tools do you currently use? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 22   Skipped: 35

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
ChatGPT	90.91%	20
Claude	18.18%	4
Gemini	22.73%	5
Grok	0.00%	0
Perplexity	9.09%	2
Total Respondents: 22		

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Q. 9: AI Tools Used (2)

#	OTHER:
1	Deepl
2	n/a
3	Copilot
4	Still use Google Translate or DeepL. I may use any of the above for a first draft when writing from scratch, but not sure.
5	Wordscope
6	Custom.MT / DeepL
7	DeepL, but not extensively
8	Google's AI feature in the browser
9	None
10	Copilot

#	
11	DeepL says it uses GenAI technology now, so I'd include it in this list.
12	DeepL
13	Rytr
14	Mostly Internal company tool with restricted access
15	DeepL, LanguageTool
16	Again you are not very specific and conveniently leave out the AI "features" built into a host of other applications.
17	DeepL, transcription tools
18	DeepL
19	DeepL
20	DeepL, Grammarly
21	DeepL

Q. 10: Free vs. Paid Versions

Q10 Do you use free or paid versions of the AI tools you use?

Answered: 34   Skipped: 23
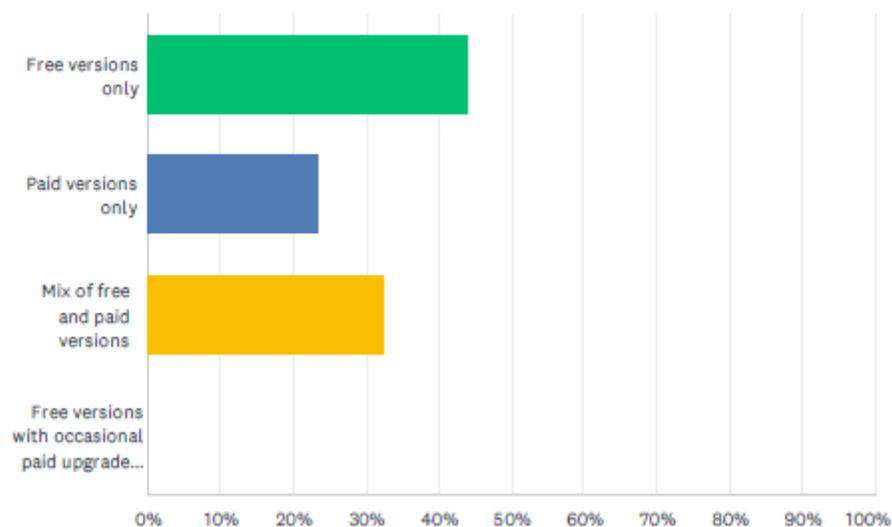
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Free versions only	44.12%	15
Paid versions only	23.53%	8
Mix of free and paid versions	32.35%	11
Free versions with occasional paid upgrades (when free limits are exceeded, for example)	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 34		

Q. 11: Impact of AI on Workflow (1)

Q11 How has AI integration changed your workflow? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 35   Skipped: 22
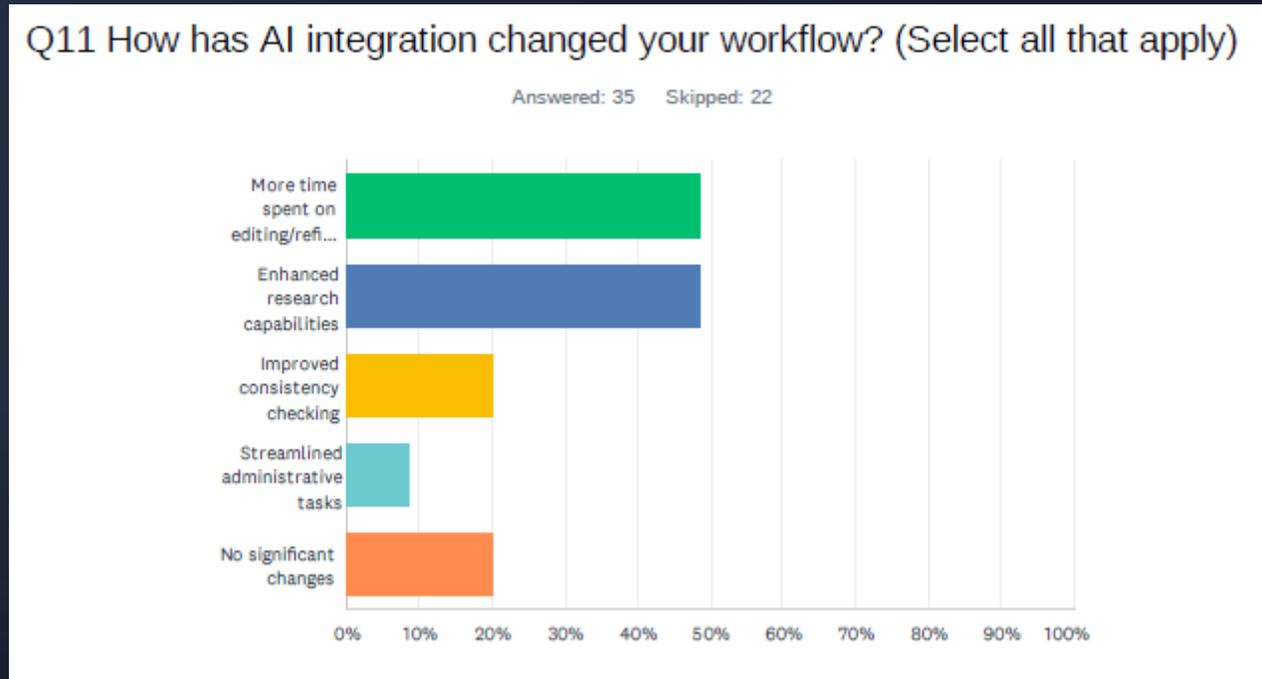
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
More time spent on editing/refinement	48.57%	17
Enhanced research capabilities	48.57%	17
Improved consistency checking	20.00%	7
Streamlined administrative tasks	8.57%	3
No significant changes	20.00%	7
Total Respondents: 35		

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Q. 11: Impact of AI on Workflow (2)

#	OTHER:
1	Gemini is trying (unsolicited) to provide explanation or confirm existence of terms (compounds included) they I search on the net.
2	I've watched it significantly reduce the quality of others' work, so I have decided to keep it far away from my workflow.
3	Makes terminology research much faster - if I don't know where to start on a highly specialized term, I'll ask ChatGPT for an idea (given the context) and then take the suggestions and research them. It's so much faster than just making educated guesses and googling them to see if there are relevant hits. I also don't feel like I get "writer's block" as much when I'm stuck on a sentence or phrase and simply can't come up with something. I used to just skip it and then go back to those parts at the end, but it sometimes got frustrating and I would end up with a translation I wasn't really happy with because I just couldn't come up with something good and the deadline was approaching. Now I don't really get frustrated with those parts. I can't think of anything good? Then I throw it into DeepL, click on some of the synonyms to get the idea-juices flowing, and I can nearly always either find something there or it helps me pinpoint what the really tricky part of the sentence is and makes me realize I can maybe work around that (separating it out into another sentence, for example).
4	I receive very few translation requests from clients and almost all editing/proofreading or MTPE

Q. 12: MT Use

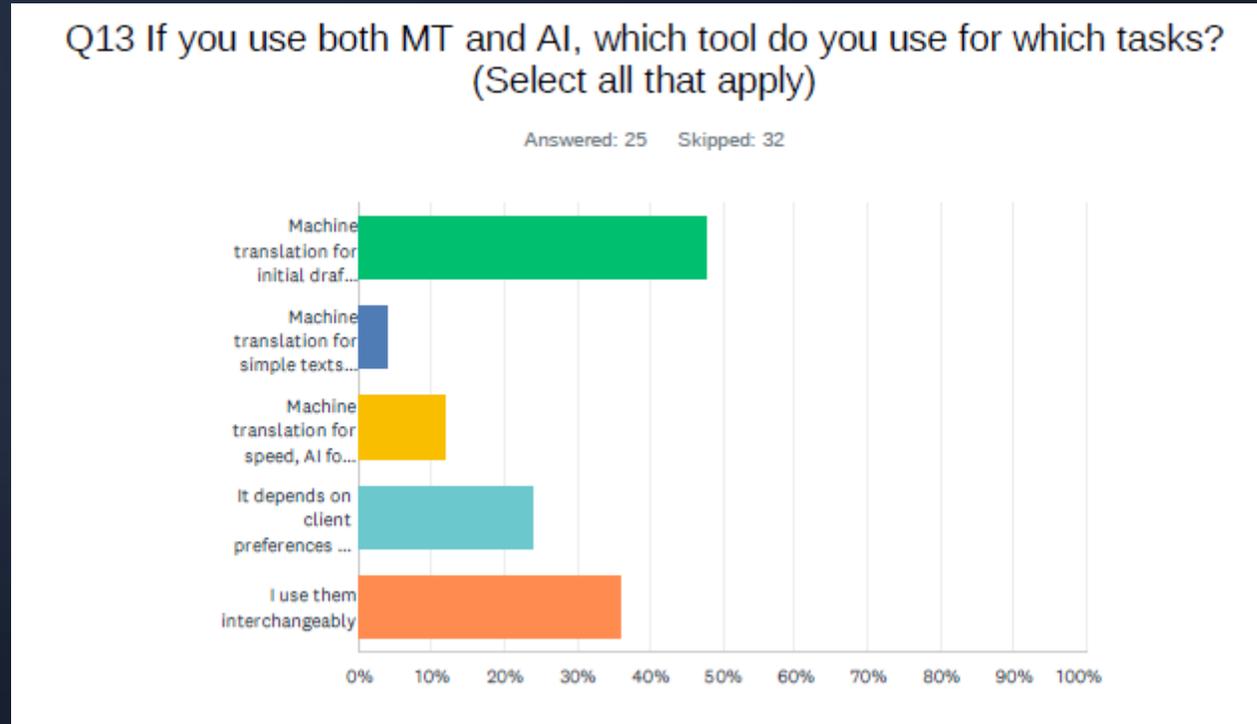## Q12 Do you still use machine translation tools or have you replaced them with AI?

Answered: 55   Skipped: 2
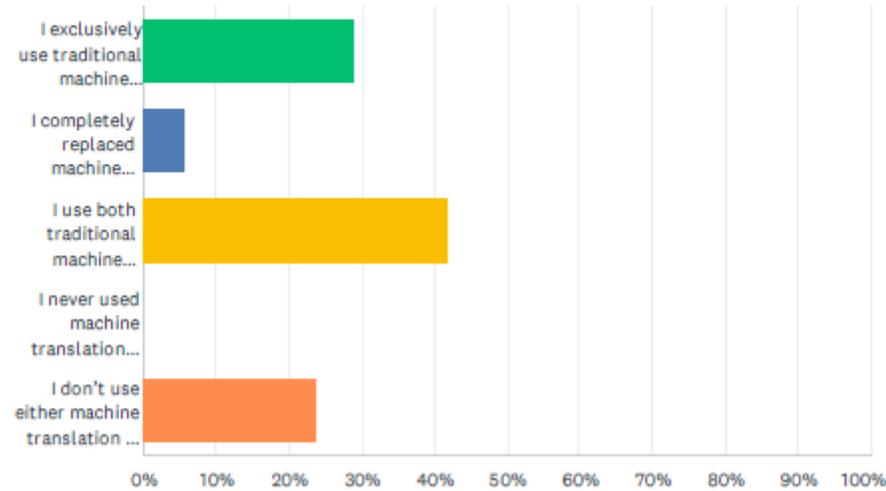
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
I exclusively use traditional machine translation tools	29.09%	16
I completely replaced machine translation tools with AI tools	5.45%	3
I use both traditional machine translation and newer AI tools	41.82%	23
I never used machine translation tools and went straight to AI tools	0.00%	0
I don't use either machine translation or AI tools	23.64%	13
TOTAL		55

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Q. 13: MT/AI Task Distribution (1)

Q13 If you use both MT and AI, which tool do you use for which tasks?
(Select all that apply)

Answered: 25   Skipped: 32

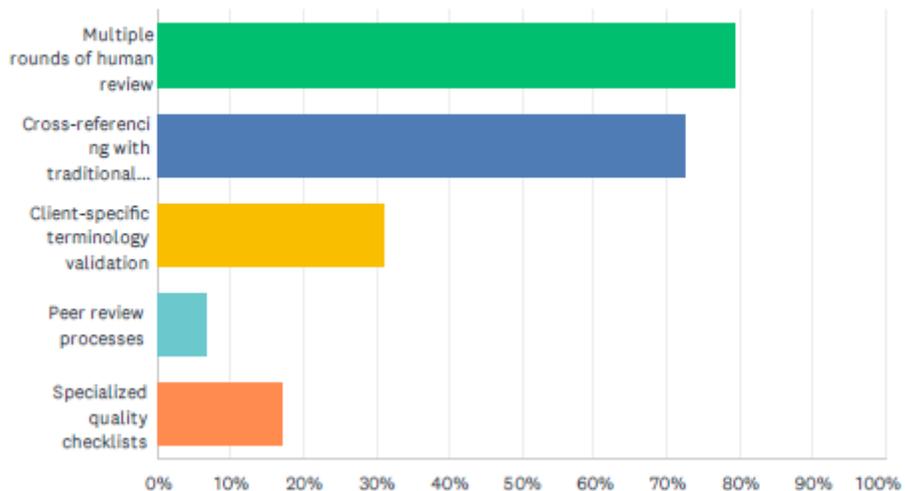| ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Machine translation for initial drafts, AI for refinement	48.00%	12
Machine translation for simple texts, AI for complex content	4.00%	1
Machine translation for speed, AI for quality	12.00%	3
It depends on client preferences or requirements	24.00%	6
I use them interchangeably	36.00%	9
Total Respondents: 25		

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Q. 13: MT/AI Task Distribution (2)

#	OTHER:
1	I'm not sure most of us really even know anymore when it's MT and when it's AI. Your list, for example, of AI providers doesn't include DeepL, but the NewGen model of DeepL is (per my understanding) using GenAI rather than NMT.
2	I don't use either.
3	With DeepL I have an NDA and AVV, so if it is remotely confidential, I will only use DeepL for any help with translation/proofreading. If it's something that's by nature public (e.g. a press release that's already been published in German), then I'll sometimes use ChatGPT to polish up some sentences. I prefer ChatGPT for that because I can tell it the parameters (tone, audience, any particular parts of the sentence I'm not happy with) and it gives me much better suggestions than DeepL Write does. When I get terminology suggestions or want help with a slogan, then I only use ChatGPT (assuming it's not confidential). DeepL is not good at that and it's one of ChatGPT's strengths, in my opinion.
4	MT is an utter waste of time.
5	Haven't used MT in a long time as I'm translating less and less, and interpreting more and more
6	I use both in very limited circumstances. I used them both for suggestions, not to complete a draft. I find that it takes me longer to edit a draft generated by NMT or AI than to do it from scratch and use them as assistants
7	I don't rely on AI material for anything except terminology where I have no personal knowledge, and then I double and triple check every single term.

Q. 14: Quality Assurance

Q14 How do you ensure quality when using AI assistance?

Answered: 29   Skipped: 28

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Multiple rounds of human review	79.31%	23
Cross-referencing with traditional resources	72.41%	21
Client-specific terminology validation	31.03%	9
Peer review processes	6.90%	2
Specialized quality checklists	17.24%	5
Total Respondents: 29		

#	OTHER:
1	The only way TO ensure quality: by not using it at all.
2	I make sure not to do huge batch tasks where I could overlook a mistake the AI makes. I do things in bits and pieces. Or when I ask ChatGPT to polish up a paragraph, I tell it to list each change, saying what the text was, what it suggests, and why it makes that suggestion. It's really helpful and ensures that I don't overlook a change that is for the worse.

Q. 15: Confidentiality (1)

Q15 How do you address confidentiality when using AI tools?

Answered: 34   Skipped: 23
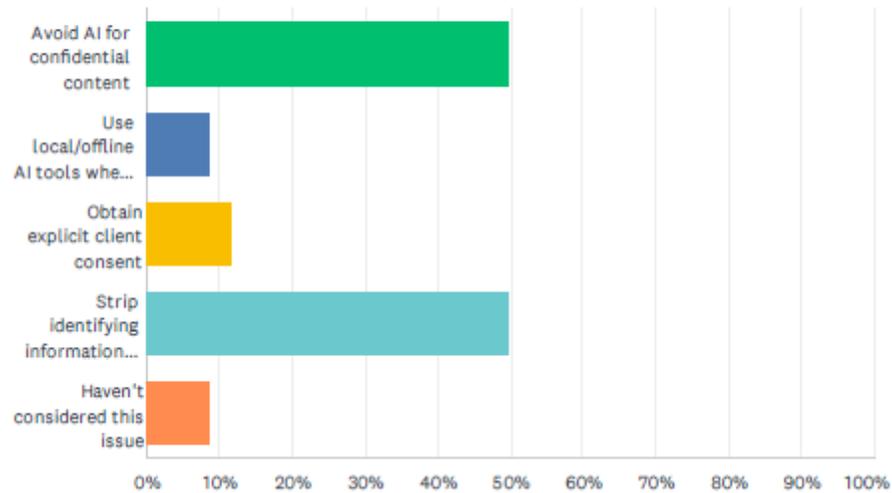
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Avoid AI for confidential content	50.00%	17
Use local/offline AI tools when possible	8.82%	3
Obtain explicit client consent	11.76%	4
Strip identifying information before using AI	50.00%	17
Haven't considered this issue	8.82%	3
Total Respondents: 34		

Q. 15: Confidentiality (2)

#	OTHER:
1	This is one of the reasons why I hesitate to use MT or AI tools. I would probably try to avoid AI for confidential content, strip information or obtain client consent.
2	I exclusively use temporary chats.
3	That is for MT but it would be the same for AI
4	There is only one way: By not using them.
5	I have DeepL plugged into my CAT tool, but I only turn it on with explicit client consent. I do have an NDA with DeepL (anyone can get one, by the way, you just have to write to them), so the confidentiality of texts isn't a big issue. For the clients from whom I do not have explicit consent to use AI tools, then I will only use DeepL for a sentence here and there and then use DeepL's web interface, not the CAT tool plugin. If I want to use ChatGPT for these clients, I make sure there is no information that would identify the client. For example, just today I needed an idea of what a term might be in English and just said "For an English article on topic X that is written for educated readers, what would be a good translation for the German term Z?"
6	There are *no* local/offline AI tools, period.

#	
7	I use AI mainly for research only or for synonyms or polishing renditions, so very low stake context.
8	Use it only as last resort in limited circumstances
9	Use paid version

Q. 16: Client Communications

Q16 How do you communicate about AI use with clients?

Answered: 36   Skipped: 21
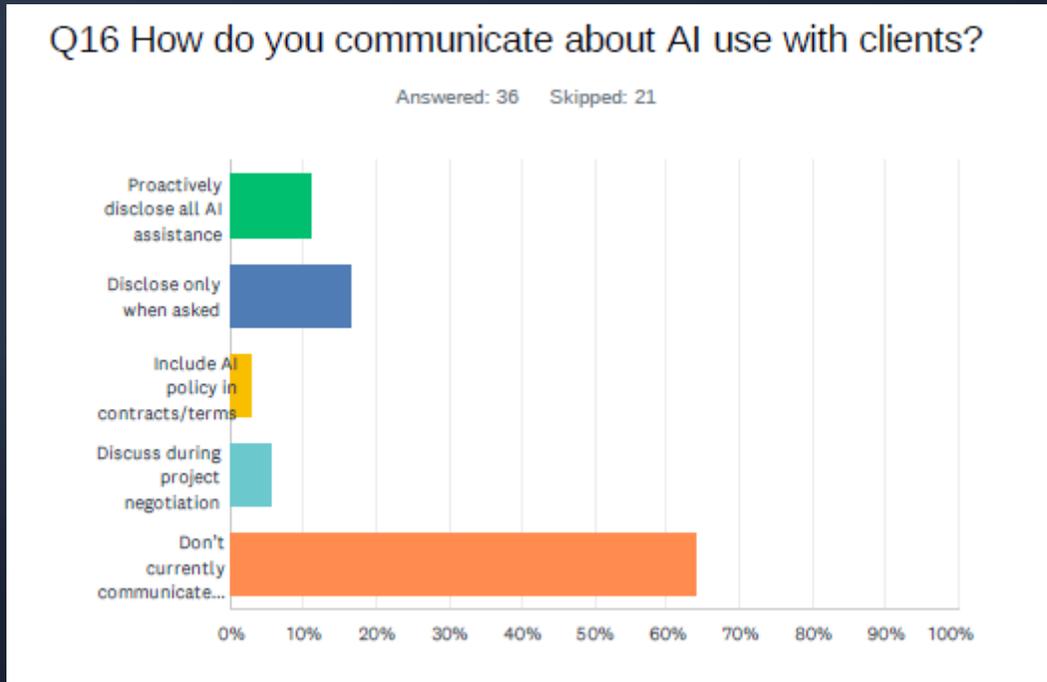

#	OTHER:
1	Not an issue for me at the moment; probably would discuss this during project negotiation, if I were to use AI tools.
2	Varies depending on use and client
3	I don't think I use AI extensively enough to discuss it with my clients. I pretty much just consult DeepL on a sentence-by-sentence basis here and there to compare my own renderings. I would consider my final translations human translations, with minimal input from AI here and there.
4	I point out the risks both in terms of accuracy and confidentiality of using 'AI tools'.
5	I use AI mainly for research only or for synonyms or polishing renditions, so very low stake context. I don't feed the client content into AI.
6	Since I rarely use it, I don't feel it's an issue

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Proactively disclose all AI assistance	11.11%	4
Disclose only when asked	16.67%	6
Include AI policy in contracts/terms	2.78%	1
Discuss during project negotiation	5.56%	2
Don't currently communicate about it	63.89%	23
TOTAL		36

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Q. 17: Ethical Concerns

Q17 What are your main ethical concerns regarding AI use in translation/interpretation? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 54   Skipped: 3
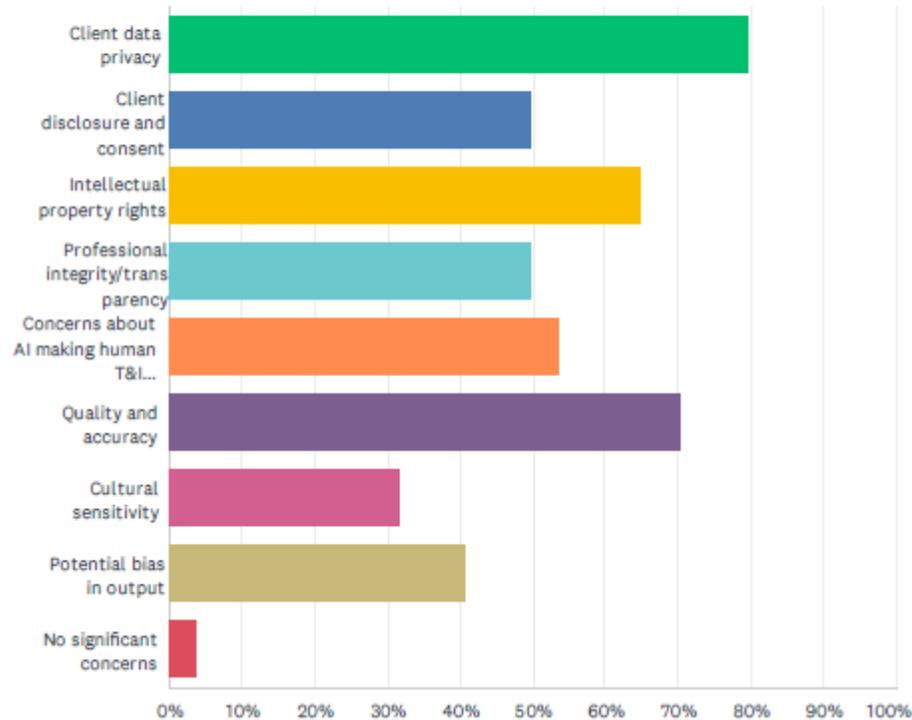
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Client data privacy	79.63%	43
Client disclosure and consent	50.00%	27
Intellectual property rights	64.81%	35
Professional integrity/transparency	50.00%	27
Concerns about AI making human T&I professionals redundant	53.70%	29
Quality and accuracy	70.37%	38
Cultural sensitivity	31.48%	17
Potential bias in output	40.74%	22
No significant concerns	3.70%	2
Total Respondents: 54		

1	The environmental harm done by AI processing
2	Terminology consistency is especially low.
3	Energy use and associated environmental costs
4	Loss of control over my TMs and term bases
5	My concern is my clients thinking AI will provide decent translations.

Q18 As AI becomes more prevalent, are you exploring alternative revenue streams that leverage your human expertise in ways that complement or differ from AI capabilities? (Select all that apply)

Answered: 46   Skipped: 11
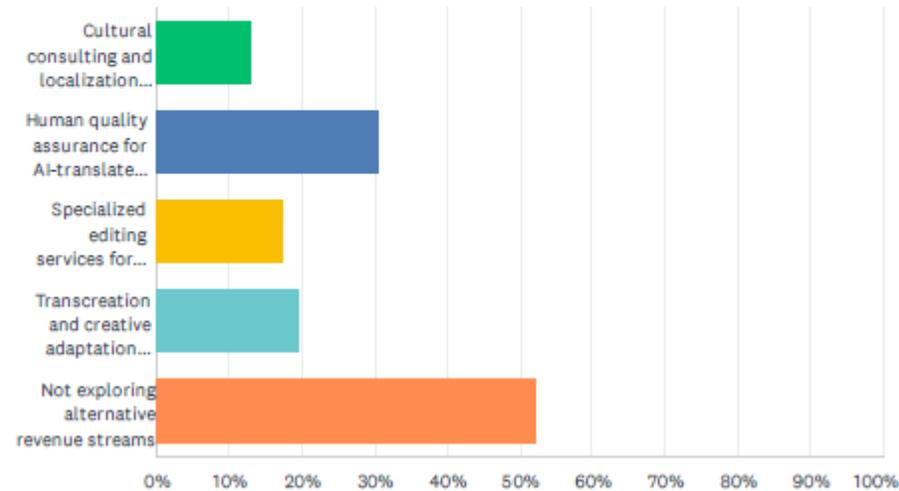
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Cultural consulting and localization services	13.04%	6
Human quality assurance for AI-translated content	30.43%	14
Specialized editing services for nuanced/sensitive content	17.39%	8
Transcreation and creative adaptation services	19.57%	9
Not exploring alternative revenue streams	52.17%	24
Total Respondents: 46		

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Q. 18: Alternative Revenue Streams (2)

#	OTHER:
1	None at the moment; human quality assurance might be a possibility
2	For the moment I have a parallel teaching career
3	Seeking a full-time inhouse role as a localization manager at a global business.
4	Thinking about an entire career change as AI seems to be destroying the translation industry
5	I've sought out revenue streams completely outside of the field in order to ride out the 'AI' bubble.
6	I assume that at some point, I will be getting fewer jobs, and the plan is to increase my in-house hours at that point. For now, however, my clients are for the most part very AI-shy organizations and I think it'll be a few more years until they disappear.
7	My main income stream is now from a different profession, became an attorney

#	
8	I am actively working on revenue streams from outside the translation field to pursue personal interests and spend more time with new skills.
9	I am considering leaving the industry altogether

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Q. 19: Additional Comments

Q19 Please share any additional thoughts, experiences, or concerns you have about AI in DE<>EN translation/interpreting/language services that were not covered in this survey:

Answered: 21   Skipped: 36

#	RESPONSES
1	AI is a useful tool for researching content, clarifying on scientific questions, which of course then needs verification by other sources. I use it like an always-up-to-date encyclopedia. If it is used like that, without confidential information, it is just like any other tool and will not violate any client rights either.
2	I have learned that one or two colleagues use MT/AI without disclosing this in non-sensitive content. I will finally be attending a seminar on the use of AI in translations in early December.
3	Recent report that hallucinations in/by AI were unavoidable.
4	I edit AI a lot. I consider its offerings as suggestions.
5	I feel that AI is eliminating beginning translators from the profession and we will end up with a profession that ages out with no one to fill the gaps.
6	Sorry I could not help much as I am not confident enough to use the suggested tools other than as stated above. Thank you for your work.
7	I'm tired of hearing about "human in the loop": the narrative pitched by SW manufacturers and LSPs selling PEMT is ringing hollow. Instead, customers should know the following: "AI is one tool among many in a translator's toolbox."
8	I think that a follow-up survey asking more detailed questions about people's perceptions of the effect of the technologies marketed as 'AI' on translation would be a good idea. There is much to say on this subject, and this survey only scratches the surface of it.
9	Significant income reduction due to 90% of translation job offers replaced by MTPE job offers. MTPE rates too low to compensate for time spent required for PE.
10	I think the technology is *highly* disruptive, but that with time, clients will make mistakes and realize that just like AI probably can't take over their entire job, AI needs to be combined with good human control over the process. If we're willing to be that control (working with better prompting, quality assurance on output, using our cultural knowledge to improve the output, etc.), then I think there is still room for expert translators.
11	I stopped providing translations at the beginning of this year, except certified document translations FR-GER/GER-FR. I'm now focusing on teaching, but at the same time I also reduced my amount of work due to my age and private situation, which is perfectly fine for me.
12	I feel AI will replace the starting translators who will wander into other fields of endeavor. Then, when the current generation retires, there will be no experienced translators to replace them. I think AI will not be able to replace the experience either.
13	See you when the bubble finishes popping. I'm as busy as ever doing AI-free translation.
14	I use it often to draft emails for me or social media posts.
15	While AI and NMT can be useful, I feel that they cannot replace a good human translator. AI is not a quick solution as many think. NMT and AI can replace translators who are not experts in their field and they make fewer grammatical and spelling errors, however, esp. in the legal field I feel there is not a really good tool and most importantly, there is only a small group of really good legal translators. Most legal translations from humans and machines leave a lot to be desired. AI takes away the unique style of humans and I fear that there will only be a few styles left, taking away our uniqueness that we express in our writing. Also, I feel we need to shift the discussion from NMT/AI vs Human to what is a good translation, how can it be achieved and where to humans provide the most value. It is a changing world no doubt. For me personally, I returned to law school to become a better translator and interpreter and ended up liking lawyering more than translating. While I still serve a few clients, my focus has really shifted to interpreting and legal work.
16	This is all just rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic. Translation as a profession is dead.
17	Legal interpreting does not allow using AI
18	As long as my brain still works, I will be using it for my work without assistance from a technology that I don't feel I can fully trust over a competent human.
19	Glad that I don't have to translate all day (or week) anymore.
20	AI is like any tool: it needs to be used with care
21	I work in a small niche field where AI plays no role at this time. My clients specifically request that no AI be used. I do use it in rare occasions where technical terms are involved (such as renovation materials of churches), but most of my work is in a field where AI is currently not nuanced enough to render usable translations. This is true for translation and interpreting jobs, though I don't interpret more than 5-10 times a year.

Breakout groups

GLD Professional Forum:
From Hype to Hands-On: Real-World AI Adoption Among DE<>EN T&I Professionals

Photo by Redd F on Unsplash

Breaking into groups

- Break into groups of no more than 4

- Assign one notetaker per group

Topic 1): Share your AI tool workflows & techniques

Topic 2): Discuss potential or actual communications with clients or potential clients on the use of AI tools.

Takeaways from breakout groups

- To follow

- To follow

Wrap-up and conclusion

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Thanks & good-bye!

THANK YOU

DANKE!

GOOD BYE

Auf Wiedersehen

SEE YOU LATER

Photos by Matt Jones, Jonathan Kemper,
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