

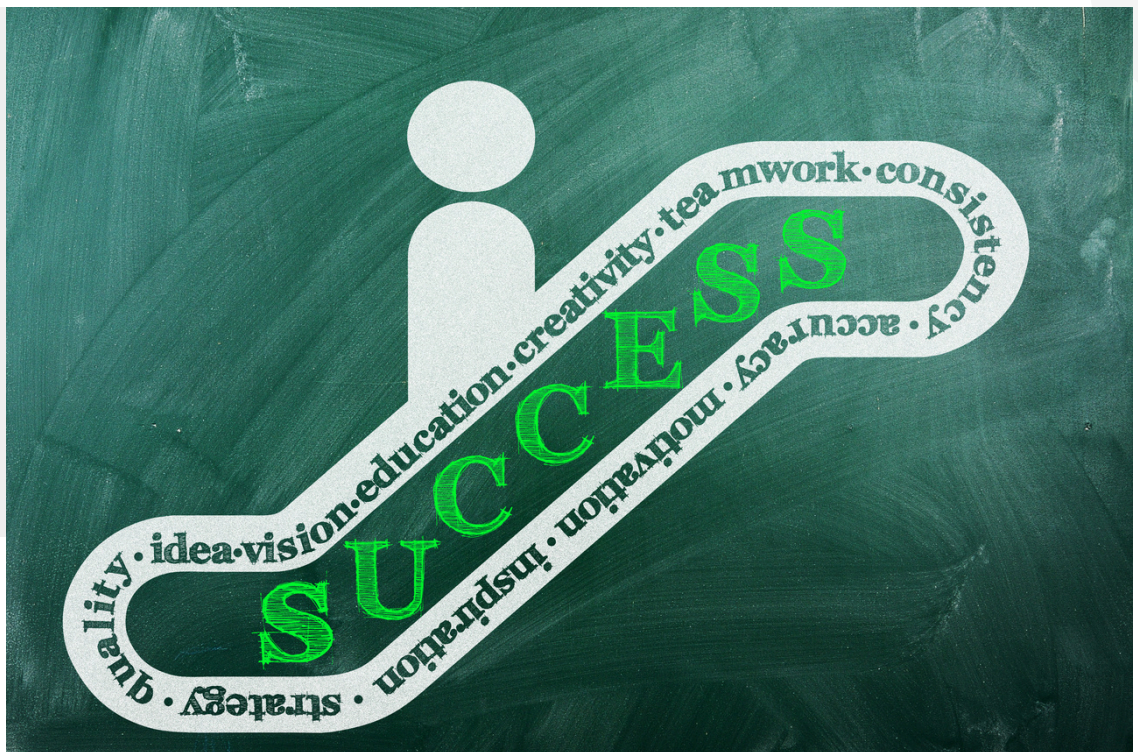
# SATI

South African Translators' Institute

## newsletter

YOUR  
LANGUAGE  
CONNECTION

04 2025



From translator to language consultant: Elevating your career path

Upcoming webinars

Riding the AI wave: Navigating the transformation of the language services industry

Lost in translation?

Did you know?



# FROM TRANSLATOR TO LANGUAGE CONSULTANT: ELEVATING YOUR CAREER PATH

## What Is a language consultant?

A language consultant doesn't just translate. They advise clients on language strategy, tone, style, cultural fit, and multilingual communication. Their role may involve:

- Guiding localisation strategies for products and services
- Editing and adapting content for specific markets
- Creating language guidelines for brand voice consistency
- Consulting on SEO and multilingual content planning
- Advising on terminology management or tone for specific audiences

Think of it this way: if a translator is a skilled technician, a language consultant is also a strategist and problem-solver.

## Why this shift matters

Clients are becoming more sophisticated in their communication needs—especially in diverse, multilingual markets like South Africa. They don't just need a translator; they need someone who understands:

- Audience nuances across languages and cultures
- Industry-specific language requirements (e.g., legal, technical, or marketing)
- Tone and voice adaptation for branding and messaging
- Project planning for multilingual campaigns

Positioning yourself as a language consultant gives you a seat at the table, earlier in the process—and often, greater influence over the final product.

## How to begin the transition

You don't need a new degree to become a language consultant – but you do need to shift your mindset, and gradually build your service offering. Here's how:

1. Identify your strengths: Are you particularly good at adapting tone, editing copy, or localising cultural references? Start there.
2. Offer small consulting add-ons: Begin offering “style guide development” or “cultural review” as optional extras.
3. Educate your clients: Many clients don't know they need a language consultant – until they work with one. Share case studies where your input improved the impact of the final product.
4. Collaborate with creatives: Work alongside marketing teams, designers, or copywriters. This collaborative exposure often reveals just how valuable your insight is.



# From translator to language consultant: continued

5. Learn the language of business: Understanding your client's objectives - whether it's market penetration, public trust, or inclusivity - makes your advice more strategic and actionable.

## Educate your clients: Show, don't just tell

Many clients don't know they need a language consultant - until they work with one. That's why it's essential to illustrate your value with real - world examples and success stories.

### Case study 1: Turning a direct translation into an impactful campaign

A translator was hired to translate a government health awareness poster into isiXhosa and Sesotho. While the direct translation was accurate, the tone felt too clinical and failed to resonate. The translator proposed adjustments - swapping out passive phrasing for more urgent, everyday language - and suggested replacing a stock image with one featuring a local community member. The result? Increased engagement at clinics, as reported by the outreach team.

✓ Consulting moment: Helping clients see why culturally adapted messaging connects better than word-for-word accuracy.

### Case study 2: Streamlining a multilingual website launch

A corporate client planned to translate their entire website into Afrikaans, isiZulu, and Xitsonga. A translator joined early in the planning phase and noticed the content was riddled with idioms and long - winded metaphors - difficult to translate and often culturally irrelevant. As a consultant, the translator recommended restructuring the content into clear, modular blocks with translatable phrasing and worked with the developers to implement a multilingual CMS (Content Management System).

✓ Consulting moment: Preventing costly rework by advising before the translation process began.

### Case study 3: Fixing the voice in a donor-facing report

An NGO hired a translator to localise their annual report for European donors. The first version came across as stiff and overly formal. The translator offered to consult on tone and narrative, aligning the messaging more closely with the donors'





# From translator to language consultant: continued

expectations (focusing on impact stories rather than statistics). The revised version received positive feedback and was even quoted in donor meetings.

✓ Consulting moment: Elevating a document from 'correctly translated' to strategically effective.

Takeaway: By sharing stories like these, you're not just promoting your services—you're educating clients on the strategic edge a language consultant brings. These examples position you as more than a service provider. You become a communication partner who enhances clarity, cultural relevance, and overall success.

## Benefits of becoming a language consultant

- Greater job satisfaction from being involved in strategy and impact
- Higher earnings through premium services
- Increased client loyalty—clients value experts who advise, not just deliver
- Professional growth beyond the boundaries of traditional translation work
- Conclusion: Translators as strategic partners

As South Africa continues to embrace linguistic diversity in business, education, and public life, the demand for nuanced, culturally aware communication will only grow. Translators who position themselves as language consultants are not just adapting to change—they're leading it.

Whether you're just starting out or have years of experience, elevating your role can set you apart—and open new doors to fulfilling, impactful work.

## UPCOMING WEBINAR

**Ethics and sustainability for translators and interpreters**

12 May 2025

Cost: GBP 22,38

Presented by Joseph Lambert, a senior lecturer in Translation Studies at Cardiff University, this online session introduces the foundations of ethics in translation and interpreting and explores a range of sustainability challenges, from the ecological impact of our work to the vital role of wellbeing and self-care.



**More info** ➔



# RIDING THE AI WAVE: NAVIGATING THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE LANGUAGE SERVICES INDUSTRY

By Chris Raulf

## UPCOMING WEBINAR

**Sustainable wellbeing and self-care for  
professional translators and  
interpreters**

19 May 2025

Cost: GBP 22,38

This online event will explore the concept of sustainable wellbeing for budding language industry professionals in a deregulated language industry that is becoming increasingly more complex. Using the latest research in the field, we will reflect on the many potential physical, cognitive and ergonomics stressors for language industry professionals and consider self-care as an imperative for all.

[More info](#) ➤

The energy at ELIA Together 2025 in Barcelona was palpable. Conversations buzzed with the latest advancements, and one topic consistently rose to the forefront: the profound impact of Artificial Intelligence on the language services industry. My session, "The Future of Language Services," aimed to acknowledge this shift and inspire a proactive embrace of the changes underway.

Let's be clear: the AI revolution isn't a distant threat; it's the current reality. Generative AI tools like Gemini and ChatGPT are no longer futuristic concepts—they're actively reshaping how we approach translation, localization, and even multilingual SEO. The speed and cost-effectiveness they offer are undeniable, forcing us to reevaluate traditional workflows and the very definition of our roles.

The AI Revolution is Here

But this isn't a story of replacement; it's one of evolution. As AI takes over more routine and repetitive tasks, the unique value of human expertise becomes even more critical. The future belongs to those who can master the nuances that machines can't replicate: the art of transcreation, the deep understanding of cultural context, and the unwavering commitment to quality assurance. As one attendee eloquently put it on LinkedIn, translators focusing on these areas will survive and thrive.



## UPCOMING WEBINAR

### Talk on The Language Profession and Professional Practice

Date: 6 June 2025

**Cost: Free**

This talk, organised by the Association of Interpreters and Translators, is online and open to all. With the rise of AI, linguists are facing new challenges to fees, terms, remuneration and maintaining their livelihoods; all while wanting to protect our own professional and ethical standards. How is AI evolving, what are its strengths and weaknesses, how much can we rely on it and how do we signal the issues and risks in using AI or cutting corners and cutting costs in translation and interpreting?

[More info](#) ➔

## Riding the AI wave: continued

### The Evolving Role of Human Expertise

This transformation demands adaptation. We must move beyond the fear of automation and embrace AI as a powerful tool to augment our capabilities. This means getting familiar with the growing array of AI-powered technologies – from sophisticated translation management systems like Lokalise AI and SDL Language Cloud to innovative video dubbing platforms like HeyGen and Papercup. It also means developing new skills and specializations that complement AI's strengths, allowing us to focus on the strategic and creative aspects of our work.

### Embracing New Technologies and Skills

The implications extend beyond traditional translation. As I discussed during my presentation, SEO is evolving into Generative Engine Optimization (GEO). We must now consider how AI-driven search platforms reshape search behaviors and adapt our multilingual SEO strategies accordingly. This requires a proactive approach, potentially even forming dedicated AI Task Forces within our organizations, as another insightful LinkedIn commenter suggested.



## UPCOMING CONFERENCE

**First Female Sign Language Interpreters Conference: The role of female sign language interpreters in mitigating the causes of gender-based violence among deaf women in developing countries**

29 to 31 July 2025

Hosted by the Association of Sign Language Interpreters of Nigeria.

More info: [info@aslin.org.ng](mailto:info@aslin.org.ng) or <https://aslin.org.ng>

## Riding the AI wave: continued

The Need for Adaptation and a Broader Perspective

The path forward requires agility, a willingness to learn, and a spirit of collaboration. As one attendee pondered after the conference, accountability for navigating this change is a shared responsibility. Freelancers, LSPs, and industry associations all have a role to play in shaping the future. By fostering a community that embraces innovation and shares knowledge, we can collectively turn this potential disruption into an unprecedented opportunity for growth and advancement.

The Future is Human-Assisted: Are You Ready?

The future of language services is not about humans versus machines; it's about humans with machines. By strategically integrating AI into our workflows, we can unlock new levels of efficiency, reach broader audiences, and ultimately deliver even greater value to our clients. The wave of AI is here – but will you simply watch it crash, or will you seize the board and learn to ride it with creativity, adaptability, and an unwavering commitment to excellence? The future is being written now. Are you ready to be a part of it?

What do you think about the future of the industry? Don't hesitate to reach out to Chris via his **LinkedIn** to continue the conversation! Plus don't miss his follow-up **webinar on 6 May, register here.**

Source: <https://elia-association.org>



## LOST IN TRANSLATION?

Significant issues must be addressed for effective interpreting services in courts

Court interpreters! Read about the recent developments around the state of court interpreting in the UK. The Ministry of Justice has published a report titled [‘Lost in translation? Interpreting services in the courts’](#), in which they acknowledge that current conditions pose a risk to the administration of justice.

You can also watch a summary of the conclusions and recommendations (including interpreting in British Sign Language). Can you relate to any of the points raised in this report?



## DID YOU KNOW?

The largest data centre provider in Africa is Teraco. It operates the three biggest data centre campuses in South Africa: Isando and Bredell (both in Johannesburg) and Brackenfell (Cape Town). It is currently constructing a 120 MW solar photovoltaic power plant in the Free State to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and address unreliable electricity grids.



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Your language is our language

## newsletter

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More about SATI at  
[www.translators.org.za](http://www.translators.org.za)