

New Trends in the Interpreter's Toolbox

AI's Impact on Pre-Interpreting Tasks

Abstract

Die rasante Entwicklung der Künstlichen Intelligenz verändert auch das Konferenzdolmetschen grundlegend. Diese Studie untersucht den Einsatz von KI-gestützten Tools in der Vorbereitungsphase und deren Auswirkungen auf Berufs- und Studierendolmetscher. Auf der Grundlage eines Mixed-Methods-Designs werden sowohl Umfragen zu aktuellen Praktiken und Einstellungen als auch angeleitete Übungen analysiert, in denen der Einsatz von KI vor und nach gezieltem Training dokumentiert wird. Die Studie kartiert relevante Tools und vergleicht KI-unterstützte Terminologiesuchen, Glossarerstellung und Textzusammenfassungen mit traditionellen Methoden. Die Ergebnisse zeigen deutliche Vorteile der Künstlichen Intelligenz in Bezug auf Geschwindigkeit und Zugang zu spezialisiertem Wissen, betonen jedoch zugleich die Notwendigkeit menschlicher Kontrolle zur Sicherung von Genauigkeit und Kontextangemessenheit. Die Teilnehmenden erkennen die Vorteile an, äußern aber Bedenken hinsichtlich Datenschutz, Qualitätsunterschieden und möglicher Überabhängigkeit. Die Studie plädiert für eine ausgewogene Integration: KI soll menschliche Expertise ergänzen, nicht ersetzen. Abschließend werden Empfehlungen für Ausbildungsprogramme formuliert, die KI-Kompetenz, ethisches Bewusstsein und kritisches Urteilsvermögen als zentrale Fähigkeiten verankern.

Keywords Artificial Intelligence, conference interpreting, digital transformation, interpreter training, terminology management

1 Artificial Intelligence and the transformation of interpreting practice

The interpreting profession is experiencing a significant paradigm shift as Artificial Intelligence (AI) becomes an integral part of its ecosystem. Historically defined as a cognitively demanding activity dependent on linguistic expertise, domain knowledge, and strategic pre-task preparation (Gile 2009; Kalina 2015), interpreting has long relied on meticulous preparatory routines aimed at mitigating the cognitive load of live performance. These routines — comprising documentation review, terminology extraction, and conceptual mapping — enable interpreters to anticipate discourse, manage processing capacity, and maintain accuracy under pressure. In recent years, however, advances in machine learning, natural language processing (NLP), and large language models have begun to reshape these foundational processes, marking a new stage in the evolution of the field.

Contemporary interpreters now have access to a wide range of intelligent tools such as ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot, or DeepL, which support automatic terminology extraction, document summarisation, and predictive analysis of content (Liu/Cheung 2023; Chen/Kruger 2024). These systems extend far beyond translation workflows, positioning AI as an active co-pilot that enhances, rather than replaces, professional expertise. Yet, this transformation is not purely technical: it entails a redefinition of the interpreter's agency, requiring practitioners to integrate automation into cognitively complex tasks without eroding the analytical depth, ethical awareness, and situational adaptability that constitute the core of the profession.

1.1 From translation technology to hybrid interpreting workflows

The historical trajectory of AI in language services — from early rule-based systems to neural and generative architectures — illustrates a gradual expansion in both functionality and cognitive reach (Downie 2020). Neural Machine Translation and transformer-based models such as BERT and GPT introduced

semantic depth and contextual coherence into machine output (Mellinger/Hanson 2018). Although initially used in translation, these architectures have rapidly migrated into interpreting, where NLP algorithms now enable the extraction of domain-specific terminology, the identification of named entities, and the clustering of recurrent concepts across large textual corpora (Álvarez Pérez 2024).

Additionally, the emergence of hybrid workflows is materialised in platforms such as KUDO or Interprefy, which include a whole range of features that illustrate an increasingly symbiotic relationship between human and machine, one that redistributes cognitive demands and procedural control. As Fantinuoli (2023) observes, AI is not a replacement but an amplifier of human capacity, enabling interpreters to transition from reactive problem-solving to proactive knowledge management.

1.2 AI and pre-task preparation

Among all phases of interpreting, pre-task preparation has been most visibly transformed by the integration of AI. Empirical evidence from the studies discussed later in further detail indicates that professionals deploy AI predominantly for terminology retrieval, glossary elaboration, and document summarisation — activities that are both time-consuming and cognitively demanding (Fantinuoli/Montecchio 2022). The adoption of intelligent tools in these areas has reshaped the temporal and cognitive architecture of preparation, redefining how interpreters acquire and organise domain-specific knowledge.

Applications such as InterpretBank or Intragloss employ NLP and statistical modelling to extract salient terms automatically, allowing interpreters to refine and verify them according to context (Fantinuoli 2023). Similarly, summarisation algorithms identify key arguments and thematic structures across large corpora, enabling interpreters to prioritise relevant information efficiently (Zhang et al. 2023). Automatic speech recognition-based systems add a performative dimension by transcribing recorded materials, synchronising them with glossaries, and thus facilitating rehearsal under quasi-authentic

conditions (Mellinger/Hanson 2018). Collectively, these technologies shift preparation from a predominantly manual, linear process to a dynamic cycle of machine assistance and human validation.

The benefits reported by interpreters are consistent: greater efficiency, faster access to terminological resources, and improved organisation of preparatory materials. However, these advantages are tempered by concerns regarding reliability, depth, and data security. Practitioners emphasise the need for critical oversight of AI-generated outputs, noting that terminological precision and contextual adequacy still depend on expert intervention. Ethical considerations are also prominent; the use of confidential documents in commercial AI environments raises questions about privacy and professional responsibility (Defrancq/Corpas Pastor 2023). Most interpreters therefore favour a complementary model that merges automation with traditional methods, using AI for acceleration while preserving human judgement for verification and conceptual integration. This approach resonates with Gile's (2009) Effort Models, which underscore the balance between reducing cognitive load and maintaining comprehension depth.

In short, AI has inaugurated a new form of preparatory ecology — one that combines algorithmic scalability with human interpretation. The interpreter's role increasingly resembles that of an editor or curator who transforms machine output into cognitively usable knowledge. Efficiency and reflection are no longer opposing values but interdependent dimensions of professional competence.

2 Artificial Intelligence in interpreter training

As AI reshapes professional practice, interpreter education must evolve in tandem. The proliferation of intelligent tools in the classroom demands not only technical adoption but also critical theorisation of their pedagogical role. Training programmes can no longer treat AI as an ancillary resource; they must incorporate it as an integral component of professional formation, while

ensuring that automation serves the development of cognitive autonomy and ethical discernment (Defrancq/Corpas Pastor 2023).

2.1 Pedagogical integration and emerging models

AI-driven technologies — particularly computer-assisted interpreting (CAI), ASR, and corpus-analysis tools — are increasingly embedded in interpreter training. They facilitate the creation of personalised glossaries, automate feedback through transcription analysis, and simulate realistic interpreting conditions (Chen/Kruger 2024). The pedagogical possibilities offered by these tools are unprecedented, yet their incorporation often precedes the necessary reflection on learning design. The pandemic context accelerated this process by normalising remote instruction and cloud-based communication (Liu 2022), creating digital infrastructures that now persist as standard practice.

Against this backdrop, Antonova (2023) introduces the notion of the *augmented interpreter*: a professional capable of collaborating with AI while preserving critical judgment and communicative autonomy. This concept situates technological competence within a broader epistemic and ethical framework. The effective interpreter of the future will not merely operate digital tools but will understand their affordances, constraints, and implications for cognition and ethics. Consequently, interpreter education must expand its scope to cultivate critical digital literacy, encompassing prompt formulation, data management, algorithmic transparency, and bias awareness. As Bhattacharya (2025) notes, such competence must also extend to educators themselves: without digitally literate instructors, the integration of AI into curricula risks devolving into uncritical mimicry of technological trends rather than informed pedagogical innovation.

2.2 Pedagogical benefits and cognitive gains

Empirical research increasingly substantiates the pedagogical value of AI when integrated thoughtfully. Corpus-based preparation workflows have been

shown to improve terminological recall and reduce omissions in simultaneous interpreting tasks (Xu 2018). By automating data collection, these tools free cognitive resources that can be allocated to higher-order processes such as discourse analysis and reformulation (Yang/Mu 2024). Moreover, ASR-generated transcripts allow for objective, time-stamped analyses of performance, transforming transient oral outputs into tangible learning artefacts (Chen/Kruger 2024). CAI platforms like InterpretBank further enhance realism by allowing students to rehearse in simulated environments with adaptive parameters such as speech rate, accent diversity, and topic complexity (Sun 2025).

2.3 Risks and constraints of AI integration

Despite its pedagogical promise, AI integration also entails cognitive, ethical, and epistemological risks that require careful management. When inadequately scaffolded, the multimodal complexity of AI environments can produce cognitive overload. Students confronted with simultaneous streams of information — speech, captions, terminology prompts — may experience fragmented attention and reduced comprehension (Guo et al. 2023). Similarly, the convenience of automation can foster dependency: overreliance on AI-generated glossaries or summaries risks weakening the analytical and reformulative capacities that are essential for professional interpreting (Liu 2022; Budiharjo 2024).

Ethical concerns are equally significant. The uploading of authentic or client-related materials to commercial platforms raises questions of confidentiality and data protection, while algorithmic bias can distort linguistic representation, particularly for under-resourced languages or non-standard accents (Zhang 2017). These issues highlight the necessity of embedding AI within a critical pedagogical framework that foregrounds responsibility and reflective decision-making. As Fan (2024) argues, genuine digital literacy involves not only technical competence but also the ability to discern when automation enhances performance and when it compromises interpretive integrity. The pedagogical objective should therefore be to train interpreters

capable of managing the tension between technological efficiency and human judgment, understanding that mastery of AI entails both its utilisation and its restraint.

2.4 Curriculum development and pedagogical outlook

The curricular implications of these transformations are far-reaching. AI literacy should be introduced early and reinforced across all stages of interpreter education, ensuring progressive acquisition of both operational and critical competences. Students must learn to design coherent workflows that combine manual and automated preparation, developing strategies for verification, revision, and ethical compliance. Equally important is the cultivation of an ethical mindset that regards data privacy, bias mitigation, and environmental sustainability as intrinsic components of professional responsibility.

Educators, for their part, must undergo parallel training to model reflective and responsible AI use. Teaching should not only demonstrate best practices but also expose limitations and failures, helping students to diagnose, correct, and learn from them. In this way, technological literacy becomes inseparable from the development of professional maturity. Ultimately, AI integration should lead not to dependency but to *augmentation* — the reinforcement of human agency through the intelligent use of digital tools.

3 Methodology

To address the dual focus of this research — professional interpreters and interpreting students — a mixed-methods design was adopted to capture both quantitative and qualitative dimensions of how Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools are used, perceived, and evaluated at different stages of expertise. Quantitative data were collected through structured questionnaires, while open-ended responses and guided classroom exercises provided qualitative depth. This

methodological integration enabled a comprehensive analysis that combined cross-sectional observations of professional practice with longitudinal insights into students' evolving engagement with AI.

3.1 Research design

A convergent mixed-methods approach (Creswell/Plano Clark 2018) was employed to triangulate numerical data and descriptive evidence. The study was organised into two complementary components.

- **Study 1** comprised a quantitative survey of professional interpreters designed to assess current patterns of AI use, the perceived reliability of AI-generated resources, and expectations concerning its future role in interpreting.
- **Study 2** involved a two-phase pedagogical intervention with undergraduate interpreting students, examining how guided exposure to Microsoft Copilot influenced their confidence, trust, and performance in pre-task preparation.

This combined design yielded a multidimensional understanding of AI integration: Study 1 captured how practising interpreters incorporate AI into their established workflows, while Study 2 examined the formative impact of structured training on student interpreters' developing technological and cognitive competences.

3.2 Participants

Professional interpreters (Study 1)

Forty-three practising interpreters participated in the survey (30 women, 13 men). The sample represented a wide age and experience spectrum: sixteen participants were aged 41–60, fifteen were between 26 and 40, seven were 20–25, and five were over 60. Professional experience ranged from beginners

(0–5 years; $n = 11$) to experts with more than two decades in the field ($n = 15$). This heterogeneity provided a balanced view of how interpreters at different career stages perceive and utilise AI in their professional routines.

Interpreting students (Study 2)

Thirty-seven undergraduates enrolled in a third-year Consecutive Interpreting BII (English) course within a university Translation and Interpreting programme participated in at least one phase of the study. Phase 1 included 33 students (mean age = 20.52) and phase 2 included 29 (mean age = 20.79), with ages clustering between 20 and 22. Some participants completed both phases, allowing for partially overlapping subgroups and enabling both within-subject and between-subject comparisons.

3.3 Instruments

3.3.1 Professional interpreters

The instrument for Study 1 combined Likert-scale items with open-ended questions to explore interpreters' use of AI in pre-task preparation. It included sections on general attitudes toward AI, frequency of use, and perceived complementarity with traditional preparation methods. Additional items examined specific applications — terminology retrieval, glossary compilation, document analysis, and summarization — as well as perceptions of efficiency, reliability, and quality compared to manually created resources. The final section addressed usability, data privacy, training needs, and ethical concerns, while open-ended items encouraged participants to elaborate on advantages, limitations, and professional expectations regarding AI integration.

3.3.2 Interpreting students

In Study 2, students completed two questionnaires — one administered before and one after a guided exercise with Microsoft Copilot. The pre-task questionnaire gathered baseline data on their familiarity with AI tools and chatbots, previous experiences, and expectations concerning potential benefits, ethical issues, and professional relevance. The post-task questionnaire

explored prompting strategies, evaluations of Copilot outputs, and perceptions of its utility in preparation. It also incorporated statements adapted from the Technology Acceptance Model to assess perceived ease of use, usefulness, attitudes toward AI, and intentions to continue employing such tools. Finally, students compared preparation with and without Copilot, reflecting on efficiency, learning depth, and any challenges encountered during the activity.

3.3.3 Procedure

For Study 1, the questionnaire was distributed online and completed anonymously. Participation was voluntary, and no identifying information was collected. Respondents answered individually and asynchronously, ensuring confidentiality and flexibility.

For Study 2, data collection was conducted in two consecutive classroom sessions designed to replicate authentic pre-interpreting conditions. In the first phase, students completed a preparatory task manually, without AI assistance, and filled in the pre-questionnaire. Several weeks later, they repeated a comparable task using Microsoft Copilot and then completed the post-questionnaire reflecting on their experience. All sessions adhered to institutional ethical standards and data protection protocols. Microsoft Copilot was used as the officially endorsed AI platform, ensuring a secure, standardised environment consistent with the educational context.

4 Data analysis

The analytical strategy combined descriptive statistics — means, medians, and frequency distributions — with an inductive thematic analysis of open-ended responses (Braun/Clarke 2006). In Study 1, Likert-type items captured general attitudes, frequency of use, and evaluations of AI tools among professional interpreters. In Study 2, within-group comparisons of pre- and post-task questionnaires assessed changes in perceived usefulness, confidence, and trust following guided exposure to Microsoft Copilot. Qualitative evidence refined these results by documenting perceived efficiency, trust, usability, ethical

concerns, limitations, and, in the student cohort, the evolution of prompting strategies and difficulties encountered during tool interaction. Triangulation of quantitative and qualitative strands provides an integrated account of how novice and experienced interpreters perceive and experience AI in pre-task preparation.

5 Professional interpreters: results and discussion

Survey data show limited commitment to paid services. A substantial majority (74.4%) reported no subscription to AI applications. One in five (20.9%) used ChatGPT Plus; one participant (2.3%) reported Gemini; none paid for Microsoft Copilot; 14% cited other platforms, and a single respondent reported multiple subscriptions. This pattern suggests experimentation constrained by cost–benefit considerations and scepticism about the added value of premium features, consistent with a phase of strategic rather than full adoption.

Perceived usefulness is, nevertheless, notable. Almost half of the sample (48.8%) rated AI as “very useful,” while 23.3% considered it “moderately useful.” Only 2.3% described it as “indispensable,” and 25.6% expressed scepticism (ratings 1–2). The prevailing view positions AI as valuable yet non-essential, reinforcing the idea of a co-pilot model in which automation supports but does not replace interpreter agency. The gap between favourable utility ratings and low subscription rates points to constraints linked to usability, training, and reliability, and indicates that, although AI has moved beyond the periphery of practice, it has not yet become central.

Regarding complementarity, most interpreters endorsed AI as an adjunct to traditional preparation. When asked if AI complements document retrieval, reading, and summarisation, 37.2% agreed and 30.2% strongly agreed; smaller proportions disagreed (11.6% “strongly disagree,” 7% “disagree”), while 14% were neutral. This distribution aligns with the view that AI strengthens established routines — especially in terminology retrieval, document filtering,

and thematic anticipation — without supplanting foundational linguistic and extralinguistic preparation.

Patterns of frequency indicate moderate engagement. While 38.5% reported frequent use and 20.9% sometimes use AI, only 7% stated that they always do so. In contrast, 14% reported rarely using AI and 18.6% never. Overall, 66.3% employ AI at least occasionally, with 45.5% doing so regularly. The presence of rare and non-users suggests persistent barriers related to training, trust, and assignment relevance, and underscores the need for targeted digital literacy.

Task profiles reveal selective adoption. Terminology search is the most common application (26 yes, 9 no), closely followed by glossary creation (24 yes, 11 no). Uses are lower for documentary search (15 yes, 19 no, 1 unsure), summarisation (16 yes, 17 no, 2 unsure), terminology extraction from specialised texts (18 yes, 16 no, 1 unsure), and the generation of key questions or parallel materials for sight translation (15 yes, 20 no). The concentration in terminological tasks, which are time-intensive and cognitively demanding, suggests that interpreters employ AI as an informational scaffold while reserving activities that require interpretive judgement — context-sensitive summarisation, pragmatic reformulation, and creative rehearsal — for more cautious, human-led control.

Evaluations of reliability, efficiency, and quality are mixed. Five respondents perceived a significant improvement in preparation quality and eighteen a moderate one; eight reported no effect and four were unsure. Time assessments are more favourable: eleven reported a significant reduction and seventeen a moderate one, although one saw no change, two noted increases, and four were unsure. Qualitative comments clarify these ambivalences. Interpreters value speed and breadth but criticise generic, decontextualised outputs that demand manual correction. The oft-cited trade-off — “time saved in search is lost in correction” — highlights a shift in the interpreter’s role from sole author to editor–curator of machine-generated content. Concerns recur around confidentiality, opacity of sources, and potential skill erosion through overreliance.

Despite reservations, a hybrid approach predominates: twenty-nine respondents prefer combining traditional methods with AI, one relies exclusively on AI, and five prefer manual strategies. Calls for training in

prompt optimisation and error detection were frequent, signalling a need to move beyond operational familiarity toward interpretive discernment. In sum, AI is appreciated for streamlining repetitive components of preparation but remains insufficient to satisfy the epistemic and discursive demands of complex assignments. Its appropriate status is that of strategic assistance, providing cognitive scaffolding and information filtering while core interpretive tasks continue to rely on human expertise, ethical judgement, and domain knowledge.

Open-ended reflections on the future confirm this balanced stance. Time efficiency, rapid access to terminology, and support with last-minute documentation were the most salient benefits. Respondents valued automation of repetitive tasks such as preliminary glossary building or initial topic exploration, which frees cognitive resources for higher-order processes. Yet they warned against superficial engagement and the “false sense of readiness” produced by uncritical reliance on AI-generated outputs. Confidentiality was a central concern, especially regarding client materials and institutional contexts where data ethics and trust are paramount. Participants also mentioned environmental costs, noting the energy intensity of generative AI. Across responses, the need for training remained a constant: interpreters asked for guidance on effective prompting, validation protocols, and the integration of AI within personal preparation styles. Overall, the outlook is cautiously optimistic: AI should operate within a hybrid, ethically governed model in which interpreters remain central to their own preparation.

6 Interpreting students: pre-/post-training analysis

The student cohort offers a forward-looking perspective on emerging professional practices. Baseline data indicate moderate familiarity with AI and chatbots but limited operational knowledge of Microsoft Copilot. Expectations were generally more positive for document analysis than for glossary creation or sight translation materials, reflecting caution about tasks demanding

deeper conceptualisation. Broader attitudes revealed interest in professional applications alongside substantial concerns about automation, deskilling, and ethics (privacy and opacity). In short, students recognise AI's relevance yet approach it critically, which underlines the need for structured pedagogical integration combining technical fluency with ethical and professional awareness.

The quality of prompting proved decisive for the effectiveness of AI-supported preparation. Approximately 34.5% of students produced high-quality prompts: instructions were clear, context-rich, and strategically sequenced to elicit terminology extraction, glossary building, concept explanation, and practice materials (including cloze and sight translation texts). A larger group (41.4%) produced medium-quality prompts — functionally aligned but underspecified in scope, output format, or organising criteria — yielding useful yet limited outputs. Finally, 24.1% generated low-quality prompts characterised by vagueness and lack of structure, resulting in generic or poorly adapted materials. These patterns demonstrate that AI's pedagogical yield depends less on tool availability than on prompt literacy as a cognitive and strategic competence.

Post-intervention evaluations of Copilot were moderately positive. The mean satisfaction score was 3.37/5; the majority rated the tool between three and four stars. Students praised speed in terminology extraction and organisational support, but they frequently mentioned the need for highly specific instructions, occasional inaccuracies (e.g., confusion between “Life Cycle Analysis” and “Life Cycle Assessment”), and limited adaptability to nuanced requests or export needs. Most agreed that Copilot improved preparation, although 31% emphasised ongoing review and correction. Technology Acceptance Model indicators pointed to favourable perceptions of usefulness, ease of learning, and intentions to continue using AI, tempered by reservations about reliability and user experience. The preference for using Copilot over manual preparation was clear (72.4%), justified by time efficiency and better organisation, whereas manual preparation was preferred by 13.8% for its contribution to deeper cognitive engagement and retention. The remaining students articulated a dual effect: AI accelerates terminology and organisation but can dampen the active processing required for higher-

order competence. Difficulties reported by roughly half the group centred on the precision of prompts, limited responsiveness to nuanced tasks, and absent export functions — barriers that reinforce the need for explicit training in prompt design and quality control.

Overall, the student data align with the hybrid preparation model: AI supplements but does not replace human cognitive work. Effective integration requires guidance on prompting, verification, and the calibration of automation so that efficiency gains do not compromise depth of learning. The results thus highlight the centrality of pedagogical framing: without a model that fosters critical engagement, AI use risks remaining superficial, whereas guided exposure can transform the tool into a vehicle for metacognitive insight and disciplined practice.

7 Discussion

Findings across both studies converge on a consistent picture: AI has become an established component of pre-task preparation, valued primarily for its ability to accelerate terminology work, filter materials, and organise inputs. Professional interpreters and students alike recognise these gains but reserve judgement — and control — over tasks that require interpretive modelling, register sensitivity, and pragmatic judgement. The result is a selective, interpreter-driven integration governed by task type: automation is deployed where it reduces repetitive cognitive load; human expertise predominates where discourse construction and ethical responsibility are at stake.

The ambivalences recorded in quality and time assessments illuminate a structural shift in the interpreter's role. AI does not eliminate preparatory labour so much as reallocate it: less time is spent on initial search and extraction, while more attention is devoted to validation, calibration, and editorial decision-making. This reallocation explains why perceived time savings coexist with reports that post-editing can offset gains. It also clarifies why perceptions of quality improve only moderately: raw outputs accelerate access, but do not replace the deep structuring that interpreters achieve through close reading and

rehearsal. The editorial role thus becomes integral to professional preparation, as does explicit training in prompt optimisation and error detection.

Ethical concerns — data confidentiality, source opacity, algorithmic bias, and environmental impact — appear not as peripheral anxieties but as recurrent conditions of responsible use. Respondents emphasised that institutional frameworks and professional codes must be respected, particularly in high-stakes settings. The prudent response is not abstention but governance: privacy-preserving practices, transparent data handling, and critical evaluation of outputs should accompany any pedagogical or professional integration of AI.

Finally, the student intervention sheds light on how educational design shapes adoption. Gains in efficiency and organisation emerged when prompting was structured and reflective. Where prompting lacked specificity, outputs were superficial and learners reported friction. This gradient underscores the importance of targeted instruction and assessment that reward not only task outcomes but also process quality — how students formulate requests, justify selections, and validate results. In this respect, AI becomes a means to render tacit strategies observable and teachable.

8 Conclusions and future directions

Across professional and educational contexts, AI demonstrates a clear capacity to enhance pre-task preparation by expediting terminology management, information retrieval, and the organisation of materials. Among professional interpreters, adoption is pragmatic and selective: automation is welcomed for routine, time-consuming tasks, yet human oversight remains indispensable to ensure terminological accuracy, contextual appropriateness, and discursive coherence. Concerns about confidentiality, bias, and potential deskilling temper enthusiasm and confirm that interpreters must preserve epistemic and ethical agency within hybrid preparation ecosystems.

From an educational standpoint, guided exposure to AI tools reshapes perceptions and practices. Students reported efficiency gains and improved lexical organisation, while also identifying limitations in semantic depth,

customisation, and the sensitivity of outputs to nuanced instructions. Post-intervention attitudes reflect cautious acceptance: willingness to continue using AI depends on explicit training in prompt design, verification routines, and ethical awareness. These findings support a pedagogical model in which AI is integrated as a scaffold subject to critical governance rather than as an unexamined shortcut.

In operational terms, three implications follow. First, AI literacy should be systematically incorporated into interpreter training, with emphasis on prompt engineering, output validation, error detection, and reflective documentation of decisions. Second, hybrid preparation models should be promoted explicitly so that automation complements, rather than displaces, the deep cognitive work of analysis, thematic structuring, and rehearsal. Third, ethical training must address data privacy, algorithmic transparency, inclusivity, and environmental impact as core — not auxiliary — dimensions of professional formation.

Future research should pursue longitudinal designs to track how interpreters' relationships with AI evolve across career stages and domains of specialisation, and to examine how varying doses of automation affect retention, register control, and performance under pressure. Comparative analyses by language pair and technical field would clarify heterogeneity in impact and inform tailored pedagogical interventions. Advancing along these lines will allow the profession to realise AI's promise — speed, scale, organisation — without compromising the interpretive agency that defines interpreting as an expert, ethical, and communicative practice.

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