

# GUIDE FOR PARENTS: SUPPORTING YOUR TEENAGER'S TRANSLATION/INTERPRETING CAREER

Mum, Dad, I want to  
work around  
the world.

That's amazing Poppy!  
Let's explore your  
options.

POPPY'S  
MUM AND  
DAD





## EDITORIAL

This visibility campaign, part of the Translating Europe Workshops Project, aims to promote careers in the language industry. Key players in the translation industry have united in this initiative seeks to inspire and guide the next generation of translators and interpreters.

### **Partners:**

**[EUATC](#)**: European Union of Associations of Translation Companies

**[FIT EUROPE](#)**: International Federation of Translators - Regional Centre for Europe

**[GALA](#)**: Globalisation and Localisation Association

**[LIND](#)**: Language Industry Expert Group

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**Overview:** Our mission is to highlight the diverse and rewarding opportunities within the translation industry, encouraging young talent to pursue careers in this dynamic field.

**Call to Action:** Join us in spreading the word about the exciting prospects in translation and interpreting. Take action and get involved in shaping the future of global communication.

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# GUIDE FOR PARENTS: SUPPORTING YOUR TEENAGER'S TRANSLATION AND/OR INTERPRETING CAREER CHOICE

BE THEIR GUIDE ON THIS EXCITING PATH.

**Hello, supportive parents!**

I'm Poppy, a professional translator, here to guide you through the exciting world of translation and interpreting. If your teenager is fascinated by languages and cultures, a career in this field can unlock a world of opportunities. This guide covers diverse career paths, essential skills, and promising prospects. Learn how to support your teen's journey from education to professional success. Their future as a global communicator begins with your support! Thank you for being their biggest supporter on this journey.

Warmest regards,  
Poppy



# NAVIGATING YOUR TEEN'S JOURNEY IN LANGUAGE CAREERS

## UNDERSTANDING THE INDUSTRY:

The translation and interpreting industry is dynamic and growing. Your teen will be entering a field with diverse opportunities, from legal and medical translation to game localisation and subtitling.

### Is a Successful Career in Translation/Interpreting Possible?

Absolutely! The language services industry is booming and growing rapidly. Market studies show that the global language services market exceeds €60 billion, reporting strong annual growth. This growth is driven by globalisation and the necessity to communicate effectively in local languages to succeed in foreign markets.

### What Does the Translation and Interpreting Industry Involve?

The translation and interpreting industry encompasses a range of activities and services aimed at facilitating global communication:

- **Translation:** Converting written content into a different language.
- **Interpreting:** Real-time spoken language conversion.
- **Localisation:** Adapting content for cultural relevance (e.g., software, websites, marketing).
- **Subtitling and Dubbing:** Creating textual or spoken content for media.

Other Key Areas:

- **Project Management:** Overseeing translation projects to ensure timely and quality delivery.
- **Quality Assurance:** Reviewing translations to maintain high standards and client satisfaction.
- **Language Engineering:** Developing and refining translation software and tools.
- **Terminology Management:** Ensuring consistency in terminology across projects.

This industry supports various sectors including business, government, science, justice, medicine, culture, education, and technology, playing a crucial role in international trade, diplomacy, and cultural exchange. Encouraging your teen to pursue careers in this dynamic field opens up a world of opportunities where language skills are highly valued.

## Industries and Fields Requiring Translation Services

Highlighting the diverse opportunities within this field is essential when guiding your teen:

- **Video Games:** Translation and dubbing for dialogues and character voices.
- **Legal:** Law firms, courts, and government agencies need legal document translation.
- **Medical:** Hospitals and research organisations require patient and professional communication.
- **Business:** Global companies need marketing, contracts, and financial document translation.
- **Media:** News, TV networks, and film studios require translated reports and documentaries.
- **Government & NGOs:** Diplomatic, trade, and outreach communication.
- **Education:** Schools and universities for international students and research collaborations.
- **Tourism:** Hotels, resorts, and attractions for international visitors.

As the global economy expands, the demand for translation services grows, making it a promising field for future careers. By fostering language skills and cultural understanding, you can guide your teen toward these rewarding opportunities in the translation and interpreting industry.



## SKILLS AND TRAINING

### What Subjects Should My Teen Study in High School?

- **Languages:** Vital for a career in translation/interpreting.
- **Flexible Pathways:** Encourage your teen to study core subjects like literature, history, or social sciences alongside languages. This approach provides a broad educational foundation, fostering critical thinking and cultural awareness, which are valuable in the translation and interpreting fields. Additionally, this combination of subjects prepares them well for further specialised education in their chosen career path.

### Value of Translation/Interpreting Studies

Supporting your teen in understanding the value of these studies is essential. Here's why it's worth it:

- **Career Opportunities:** Growing industry with high demand for skilled translators and interpreters.
- **Transferable Skills:** Skills in research, project management, and discipline are transferable to various fields.
- **Personal Growth:** Enhances cultural awareness and language mastery.
- **Tech Skills:** Learn to use advanced translation and localisation tools.

### How Can My Teen Become a Translator/Interpreter?

There are various paths to becoming a translator/interpreter, depending on factors like location, language skills, and willingness to study abroad:

- **Study Translation/interpreting at University:** Specialise in translation/interpreting and enter the industry directly.
- **Love languages:** Proficiency in multiple languages is essential.
- **Combining Studies and Passion Projects:** Encourage studying subjects they love, such as law, medicine, or technology, alongside languages to develop specialised knowledge, and combine this with a renowned language certification to enhance their career path.
- **Other Careers:** This industry also includes subtitling or sign language expertise.



## Combining Translation Skills with Other Disciplines: Expanding Horizons for Students

Combining translation skills with other areas can broaden career opportunities:

- **Economics:** Translating economic data, financial reports, and facilitating international business communications.
- **Human Resources (HR):** Managing multilingual employee communications and translating policies and training materials.
- **Journalism:** Working as international correspondents, translating news reports, and conducting interviews.
- **Design:** Localising user interfaces, websites, and marketing materials.
- **Gaming:** Localising games for different regions.
- **Legal Field:** Translating contracts, legal documents, and court proceedings.
- **Marketing and Advertising:** Localising content, slogans, and promotional materials.

## Necessary Skills for Future Success

To excel in translation and interpreting, your teen needs a blend of soft and technical skills, along with specific domain expertise:

### Soft Skills:

- **Communication:** Clear and effective interaction.
- **Attention to Detail:** Precision in translation and interpreting.
- **Cultural Sensitivity:** Understanding cultural nuances.

### Technical Skills:

- **CAT Tools Proficiency:** Gain expertise in computer-assisted translation tools to enhance efficiency and consistency in your translations.
- **Terminology Management:** Learn to manage terminology effectively to ensure the consistent use of terms across different projects, improving accuracy and coherence.
- **Project Management Software:** Get skilled in project management platforms to streamline workflows, manage deadlines, and collaborate effectively with clients and team members.

### Other Key Skills:

- **Language Proficiency:** Fluency in multiple languages.
- **Creativity & Problem-Solving:** Innovative solutions for complex translations.
- **Specialisation:** Knowledge in fields like legal, medical, technical, or audiovisual translation.
- **Tech Savviness:** Adaptability to digital tools and emerging technologies.
- **Project Management:** Organisational skills and effective communication.
- **Curiosity:** Open-mindedness and a continuous learning mindset.

Encourage your teen to develop these skills to thrive in the evolving landscape of translation and interpreting.

## Universities Offering Translation Studies in Europe

There are many universities across Europe offering courses in translation. To find the best options:

### Networks and Organisations:

- **[European Masters in Translation Network](#):** Check for top-class universities in this network.
- **CIUTI:** Another organisation with affiliated universities providing high-quality translation and interpreting courses.

### Research Tips:

- **Country-Specific Searches:** Look for universities in specific countries that offer translation programmes.
- **Professional Associations:** Contact national professional associations for recommendations on reputable universities.

Exploring these resources will help you find the most suitable universities for your teen.



## Duration of Translation/Interpreting Studies

Supporting your teen in understanding the academic journey is crucial. Here's a quick overview of the typical duration:

### Typical Duration:

- **Bachelor's Degree:** 3-4 years.
- **Master's Degree:** 1-2 years.

### Postgraduate Requirements:

- **Varies by Employer:** Some require master's degrees, while others accept bachelor's degrees.
- **Language Combinations:** Availability of degrees may vary for specific language pairs.

### Choosing Specialisations:

- **Undergraduate Level:** A joint interpreting/translation degree offers flexibility.
- **Master's Level:** Specialise based on talents and interests.
- **Tech Skills:** Look for degrees that blend translation/interpreting with tech skills like AI and programming.



# CAREER PATHS AND OPPORTUNITIES

## Career Opportunities in Translation/Interpreting

A degree in translation and interpreting opens up a world of career possibilities beyond traditional roles. Your teen can explore diverse paths such as:

### Traditional Roles

- **In-House Translators:** Stability with companies or agencies.
- **Freelance Translators:** Flexibility and independence.
- **Interpreters:** Real-time language conversion in various settings.
- **Localisation Specialists:** Adapting content for different cultures.
- **Subtitlers and Dubbers:** Translating and adapting content for films, TV, and online media.
- **Project Managers:** Overseeing translation projects from start to finish, ensuring quality and timeliness.
- **Terminologists:** Maintaining consistency in terminology across projects.
- **Quality Assurance Specialists:** Reviewing translations to meet high standards and client requirements.
- **Sign Language:** Translating content into sign language, adapting it for different formats to make media accessible to a broader audience.

### Emerging Roles

- **AI Trainers:** Teaching AI systems to improve language processing.
- **Language Engineers:** Creating and refining translation software.
- **Prompt Engineers:** Designing AI content prompts.
- **Data Annotators:** Labelling data for machine learning.
- **Localisation Project Analysts:** Using data to optimise localisation strategies.
- **Multilingual SEO Experts:** Enhancing global online visibility by optimising content for search engines in multiple languages.

## Combined Skills

- **UX/UI Localisation Designers:** Ensuring culturally appropriate user interfaces.
- **Content Creators:** Developing multilingual content for various sectors.
- **International HR Managers:** Combining language skills with human resources for global companies.
- **HR and Interpreting:** Assisting in multilingual HR departments, handling interviews, training sessions, and employee relations in different languages.
- **Economics and Interpreting:** Providing interpretation services for economic conferences, trade negotiations, and financial institutions.
- **Science and Interpreting:** Facilitating communication at scientific conferences, research collaborations, and medical consultations.
- **Journalism and Interpreting:** Working as interpreters for international news agencies, covering events, and conducting interviews.
- **Design and Localisation:** Collaborating with designers to adapt visual content for different cultural contexts.
- **Video Gaming:** Translating in-game dialogues, instructions, and promotional content.
- **Blogging and Content Creation:** Writing multilingual blogs and creating engaging content for international audiences.
- **Social Media Management:** Handling multilingual social media accounts for global brands.
- **Other Combinations:** Exploring intersections with technology, business, and more.

## Academic

- **Teaching and Research:** Instructing translation and interpreting students at universities, conducting research in translation studies, and contributing to academic publications.

By understanding and communicating the breadth of career options, parents can help their teens to see the vast potential their skills can unlock.



## Highlighting Global Opportunities

The translation and interpreting industry offers numerous global opportunities that can lead to exciting careers around the world.

- **Work Internationally:** Translators and interpreters are in high demand across various sectors globally, including business, healthcare, law, and government. This demand allows professionals to work in different countries, experiencing new cultures and languages firsthand.
- **Remote Work:** Many translation and interpreting jobs can be done remotely, offering the flexibility to work from anywhere. This opens up the possibility for a nomadic lifestyle, where your teen can travel and work simultaneously.
- **International Organisations:** There are opportunities to work with international organisations such as the United Nations, European Union, and non-governmental organisations (NGOs), where multilingual communication is essential.
- **Cultural Exchange:** Working in different countries allows translators and interpreters to engage in cultural exchange, enhancing their personal and professional growth. This exposure can lead to a deeper understanding of global issues and enhance their cross-cultural communication skills.
- **Conferences and Events:** Interpreters often travel to international conferences and events, providing real-time translation services. This can be an exciting way to meet people from all over the world and stay up to date on global trends and developments.

Encouraging your teen to pursue a career in translation or interpreting can open doors to a life of travel, cultural immersion, and global connectivity. This field not only offers professional growth but also the chance to become a true citizen of the world.



## CHALLENGES AND MISCONCEPTIONS

### Navigating Challenges and Reaping Rewards in the Translation Industry

Supporting your teen means helping them navigate the challenges and enjoy the rewards in the translation industry.

### Common Misconceptions About Translation

Working in translation is often misunderstood. Here are some common misconceptions:

- **Translation is About Books and Subtitling:** Many think translation is limited to books and movies. However, translators work in legal, medical, technical, and business fields, among others, ensuring accurate communication across diverse contexts.
- **Translation is Simple:** Translation is not just bilingualism; it requires specialised skills, training, and attention to detail.
- **Machines Can Replace Humans:** Machine translation lacks nuance; human translators are irreplaceable for complex content.
- **Solitary Work:** Many work in teams with other translators, project managers, and editors.

For more info, see [Discover Translation](#).

### Will Machine Translation and AI Make Translators Obsolete?

While advances in machine translation (MT) and artificial intelligence (AI) impact the industry, they won't replace human translators entirely.

### Will Machine Interpreting and AI Make Interpreters Obsolete?

AI and machine interpreting can assist with simple tasks but can't replace the nuanced understanding human interpreters provide.

## What Is The Role of Technology and AI in a Translator's and Interpreter's life?

Modern translation and interpreting are deeply intertwined with technology and AI tools. As a parent, it's important to help your teen understand that becoming a translator or interpreter also means mastering a range of technological tools.

Translators use Computer-Assisted Translation (CAT) tools to manage large projects efficiently. They may utilise machine translation tools, with human post-editing to fix issues. Terminology management tools ensure consistency across translations, while project management software helps organise workflows.

Interpreters also benefit from AI and tech tools. Platforms like Interprefy enhance remote interpreting, and various AI tools assist with language processing. Encouraging your teen to become proficient with these technologies will help them stay competitive and effective in this evolving industry.

### Supportive Role

- **Efficiency Boost:** AI and machine interpreting can assist with simple tasks, speeding up the process. A professional eye is needed to determine whether the tool will be useful or not.
- **Human Review Needed:** Machines lack cultural nuance and context understanding, requiring human editing for accuracy. Machines make mistakes; human oversight remains essential.

### Human Expertise

- **Complex Translations:** Specialised fields (e.g., legal) need human insight and expertise.
- **Cultural Sensitivity:** Human translators preserve artistic intent, emotional impact, and ethical considerations.
- **Growing Demand:** Diverse societies require interpreters in critical settings like hospitals and courts.
- **Universal Skills:** Language and translation skills are valuable across various careers.

### Evolving Tools

AI and tech are becoming valuable tools in an interpreter's toolkit, enhancing efficiency but not replacing human skills. Encourage your teen to view technology as a tool that enhances their abilities, not as a replacement.

## What is the competition like?

As a parent, you might be concerned about the competitive landscape in the translation industry. Here's what you need to know:

- **Varies by Specialisation:** Competition depends on language pairs and specialisation. Focusing on niches like medical, legal, or tech translation can help reduce competition.
- **Freelance vs. In-House:** Freelancers face different challenges compared to those in in-house positions.
- **Global Reach:** While competition is global, so are the opportunities.

## DAILY LIFE IN THE PROFESSION

### What Are the Typical Working Hours?

Working hours in translation and interpreting can vary widely: For in-house translators, expect standard 9-to-5 office hours. Freelancers enjoy the flexibility to set their own schedules. Interpreters may have more irregular hours, depending on the nature of their assignments.

### A Typical Day Like for a Translator

Supporting your teen's interest in translation helps them understand the daily dynamics of this career. A translator's day involves:

- **Start of Day:** Check project requirements and deadlines.
- **Translation Work:** Research terms and translate various content types.
- **Quality Control:** Ensure translations meet client requirements.
- **Client Communication:** Obtain clarifications via email, phone, or video conferencing.
- **Project Management:** Organise and manage files, invoices, and tools.
- **Professional Development:** Continuous learning through reading industry publications, attending conferences, and taking courses.
- **Time Management:** Prioritisation is a must to balance multiple tasks efficiently.



## A Typical Day for a Conference Interpreter

Conference interpreters facilitate communication at international meetings. Their day includes:

- **Client Communication:** Define assignment specifics, language combinations, and working conditions.
- **Team Coordination:** Act as intermediaries, share glossaries, and ensure team coordination.
- **Research & Preparation:** Extract terminology, create glossaries, research topics and speakers.
- **Sound Checks:** Ensure excellent audio feed and audio quality.
- **Interpreting:** Work in pairs, taking turns to maintain accuracy.
- **Feedback:** Obtain client reviews by collecting feedback to improve future assignments.

## A Typical Day for a Subtitler

Subtitlers blend translation with technical tasks. Their day involves:

- **Translation & Editing:** Accuracy: Ensure subtitles fit within spatiotemporal constraints.
- **Technical Aspects:** Select the right software, use specialised tools for automation and efficiency.
- **Content Variety:** Subtitle everything from TV shows to corporate videos.
- **Project Management:** Handle client specs, quality control, and invoicing.
- **Visibility:** Often credited for their work and may receive royalties.





# PRACTICAL EXPERIENCE AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

## Personal Growth and Development

Supporting your teen in studying translation or interpreting offers them more than just language skills. It fosters advanced communication abilities, deep cultural understanding, and critical thinking. They'll become adaptable, creative problem-solvers, equipped for diverse professional and personal opportunities. This journey not only prepares them for a dynamic career but also enriches their global perspective and personal growth.

## During or After Graduation, How Can My Teen Gain Experience in Translation or Interpreting?

Building practical experience in translation is crucial for career development. Here are some effective ways your teen can gain experience while studying or after graduation:

- **Internships:** Many translation agencies and companies offer internship programmes.
- **University Support:** Compulsory internships are often included in translation programmes.
- **Volunteering:** Gain practical experience and build a portfolio by offering translation services to non-profits and community groups.
- **Language Exchange:** Improve language skills and cultural understanding by living with native speakers.
- **Professional Associations:** Join national and international translation associations for professional development and mentoring.

## Acquiring and Combining Skills for Diverse Opportunities

Supporting your teen's career aspirations involves guiding them on how to acquire and combine skills to open up more opportunities in the translation and interpreting industry.

### Skill Acquisition:

#### 1. Education:

- **Formal Training:** Enrol in translation/interpreting programmes at universities.
- **Specialised Courses:** Take courses in legal, medical, technical, or literary translation to build niche expertise.
- **Technology Training:** Learn to use CAT tools, machine translation, and other industry-specific software.

#### 2. Practical Experience:

- **Internships:** Gain hands-on experience through internships at translation agencies or companies.
- **Volunteering:** Offer translation services to non-profits or community groups to build a portfolio.
- **Freelance Projects:** Start with small freelance projects to gain practical insights and client interaction experience.

#### 3. Continuous Learning:

- **Professional Development:** Attend industry conferences, workshops, and webinars.
- **Certifications:** Obtain certifications from recognised bodies like the TOEFL (Test of English as a Foreign Language), TOEIC (Test of English for International Communication), DELE (Diplomas of Spanish as a Foreign Language), DELF/DALF (Diploma in French Language Studies), and JLPT (Japanese-Language Proficiency Test). These certifications validate your language proficiency and can enhance your professional credibility.

### Combining Skills:

#### 1. Language and Technology:

- **AI and Data Analytics:** Learn AI training, data annotation, and prompt engineering to work in tech-driven roles.
- **Software Development:** Understand the basics of coding and software development to become a language engineer.

## 2. Business and Management:

- **Project Management:** Develop skills in project management to oversee translation projects.
- **Business Courses:** Take business courses to understand market dynamics and client management.

## 3. Creative and Analytical:

- **Content Creation:** Hone skills in creative writing and multimedia content creation for roles like multilingual content creators.
- **Analytical Skills:** Improve data analysis skills for roles such as localisation project analysts.

Encouraging your teen to pursue these educational paths, practical experiences, and combined skills will enhance their adaptability and open up numerous career opportunities in the dynamic field of translation and interpreting.

## Who to Contact for Career Guidance

Are you curious about your teen diving into a translation or interpreting career? Here's where to start:

- **Language Teachers:** Secondary school language teachers are invaluable sources of information and guidance.
- **Career Guidance Advisors:** These advisors provide personalised advice and resources tailored to your teen's interests and goals.
- **Professional Associations:** Look into outreach programmes from translation and interpreting associations. Reach out to them via their websites or emails for more details.
- **Associations of Translation Companies:** These organisations offer activities and insights into the industry.
- **Universities:** Attend open days to learn about courses, entry requirements, and get hands-on experience.
- **Networks:** Connect with the [European Masters in Translation Network](#), national professional associations, and the International Federation of Translators ([FIT](#)).
- **Translation Contests:** Encourage participation in the [Jvenes Tradutores](#) contest promoted by the EU DGT. It's a great way to showcase skills and gain recognition.

These resources will provide all the information and guidance your teen needs to explore a rewarding career in translation and interpreting.

## MARKET INSIGHTS AND EARNING POTENTIAL

### Is It Possible to Make a Good Living as a Translator and Interpreter?

Yes, it is possible to have a successful and lucrative career in translation.

#### Factors Influencing Earnings:

- **Language Combination:** Niche languages often command higher rates.
- **Specialisation:** Legal, technical, and other specialised translations can be more lucrative.
- **Experience & Expertise:** Higher rates come with more experience and expertise.
- **Better Conditions:** Collective Bargaining: EU rules now allow freelance translators to negotiate better conditions through professional associations.

While success varies, proactive involvement in professional associations and continuous skill development can enhance career prospects.

### Is There Enough Work for Translators and Interpreters?

The translation and interpreting industry is thriving, driven by increasing globalisation and the necessity for multilingual communication. The industry offers plenty of work for those who stay current and flexible.

### Is the Translation and Interpreting Market Growing?

The language services industry is booming, driven by globalisation and technological advancements. Embracing new technologies is key to staying relevant.

## How much can I expect my teen to earn?

Understanding potential earnings is crucial for supporting your teen's career choice. Here's an overview:

### Realistic Earnings:

- **Income Scale:** Rates can vary widely, from a price per word to a price per hour, based on job specifications and client requirements.
- **Freelance Flexibility:** Freelancers can set their own rates. The amount you can earn depends on factors like the volume of work and specialisation. For instance, translating a significant volume of words monthly can lead to substantial earnings.
- **In-House Stability:** Working in-house provides a steady income, with annual salaries typically ranging from €25,000 to €50,000, depending on location and specialisation.
- **Growth Potential:** Earnings grow with skills, market demand, and the ability to leverage new technology.

### Additional Factors:

- **Specialisation Advantage:** Legal, medical, and technical translators often command higher rates.
- **Technology and AI:** Leveraging new technologies can enhance efficiency and marketability, opening up higher earning potential.
- **Professional Development:** Continuous learning and networking through professional associations can lead to better job opportunities and higher income.



## HOW YOU CAN HELP YOUR TEEN

Supporting your teen on their journey to becoming a translator or interpreter is crucial. As a parent, your encouragement, resources, and guidance can make a significant difference. From exploring various languages and cultures to seeking educational opportunities and real-world experiences, your involvement can help them build a solid foundation for their career. Here are some ways you can actively support and inspire your teen as they navigate this exciting path.

### Encourage Exploration

Help your teen explore various languages and cultures through books, movies, and travel.

### Support Education

Look for schools and universities with strong translation and interpreting programmes.

### Promote Experience

Encourage internships, volunteer opportunities, and part-time work in related fields.

### Networking

Connect with professionals in the industry for advice and mentorship.

### Stay Informed

Keep up with industry trends and technological advancements to help guide your teen's career decisions.

# ARE YOU NOW EQUIPPED TO SUPPORT YOUR TEEN IN THE WORLD OF TRANSLATION AND INTERPRETING?

As a parent, you play a key role in guiding your teen towards a rewarding career. The translation and interpreting industry offers diverse and exciting global opportunities. This guide has provided you with insights into career paths, the importance of technology, and how to support your teen's journey. Encourage your teen to explore these opportunities and embark on a fulfilling career in global communication.

Warm regards,  
Poppy



