



THEMATIC NETWORK PROJECT IN THE AREA OF LANGUAGES III

SUB-PROJECT ONE:

LANGUAGES FOR LANGUAGE-RELATED INDUSTRIES AND PROFESSIONS

NATIONAL REPORT / BELGIUM

Marc Van de Velde, Hogeschool Gent

Sub-project 1: Languages for language-related industries and professions

National Report for Belgium

Marc Van de Velde
Hogeschool Gent
Departement Vertaalkunde

February 24th 2005

Introductory note

Due to a concurrence of circumstances the preparation of this report was started rather late. For this reason, the report could be based on only partial information, and the greater part of this information relates to the situation in Flanders. Nevertheless, as there are no direct indications that significant differences exist between the two parts of the country, the report may be of relevance for Belgium as a whole.

I would like to express my thanks to the institutions and persons who helped me in the preparation of the report, especially Ian Tudor (Université Libre de Bruxelles) for discussing the content of the report and for linguistic help, and Erik Hertog (Lessius Hogeschool), who provided me with valuable information about community and legal interpreting.

PART I STATUS QUO

I.1. Overview of the present situation of language-related industries and professions in the national labour market (on the basis of existing studies and available data)

I.1.1. Language-related industries and activities present at the national level: type and organisation

I.1.1.1. Private sector

Translation/Interpreting

The activities in translation/interpreting are reflected in the number of companies liable to VAT (1998-2002), as they appear in the statistics of the Federal Public Service SMEs, Self-employed and Energy (www.statbel.fgov.be)

1998	1999	2000	2001	2002
3012	3011	3051	3175	3179

Belgium		Flanders		Wallonia		Brussels	
2001	2002	2001	2002	2001	2002	2001	2002
3175	3179	1587	1621	754	742	834	816

As the figures show, there was a small increase between 1998 and 2002, especially in Flanders. Most of the companies are rather small, often even one-man-businesses.

In the Yellow Pages (Gouden Gids) 2003-2004 almost half of the translation and interpreting agencies (113/229 and 18/38 resp.) are listed under an individual name.

A few of them specialise in a specific area (interpreting, translation for the automotive industry, for agricultural and biotechnology, etc) or specific language combinations (Polish; Slavic languages, etc), but most offer a broad range of services.

A survey of websites shows that the permanent staff in such companies is normally small, although it is sometimes reinforced by freelancers, often native-speakers (cf. Rura et al. 2004).

The small size of the companies influences their way of working. One of the companies even explicitly rejects team-work and insists that every translation be done by one translator, as it sees this as the only way to produce a good translation.

This also means that in many of these companies only limited use is made of new technologies.

Often the service offered is restricted to translation proper.

Larger companies do not limit themselves to translation, but offer a wide range of integrated services, as can be seen from the overview of the services offered by 2 international companies:

Products and documents/Marketing and Communication/Regulatory Compliance/Training and e-learning/Globalization strategy

Translation/sworn translation/editing and publishing/writing/proofreading and rewriting/websites and multimedia/localization/dubbing/advice and training... up to logistics for conferences

Publishing houses, journals and periodicals normally do not have their own translation department, but work with freelance translators (Rura et al. 2004).

Big industrial companies have their own translation department, but often translation is done by employees with foreign language skills, who have other tasks too.

Subtitling

Especially in Flanders, the launch of several commercial TV-channels gave rise to an expansion in subtitling activities, and a few companies specialised in this field grew rapidly.

Recently, economy measures caused by the worsening economic situation and the tougher competition in the field has caused a decline in activities in this field.

Language learning

Besides 'regular' schools there are numerous private language schools which offer tailor made language instruction, for business or for personal enrichment, with in-class or on-line courses.

Language technology

The web-site of the Nederlandse Taalunie, an intergovernmental organisation in which the Netherlands, Flanders and Suriname co-operate in the field of the Dutch language, language teaching and literature, lists no less than 50 companies working in the field of language and speech technology in Flanders and the Netherlands. (see taalunieversum.org/taal/technologie/ontwikkelaars.php)

There are no data available on employment in this sector and on its economic importance.

I.1.1.2. Government and Public service

Translation/interpreting

As Belgium is a trilingual country, ministries, the Parliament and other governmental bodies all have their own translation services with a permanent staff of in-house translators/translators-revisers/interpreters.

Legislation has to be available in the national languages, and there have to be interpreting services available in meetings of Parliament.

The Army, big cities and related organisations with frequent international contacts also have in-house translators.

243 translators/translators revisers/translators interpreters are employed in the federal services (Personal communication by the Federal Public Service for Personnel and Organisation FOD/SPF P&O).

Courts, immigration offices, bodies dealing with refugees and asylum-seekers, hospitals etc. make use of (freelance) sworn/community interpreters.

As to community interpreting, there are specialised public services offering interpreting (by telephone) and in some cases also (authenticated) translations for other public services and social organisations (in the field of (youth) welfare, health, education etc.) for their communication with foreign speakers (migrants, refugees, etc). These services are offered free of charge or at a low price.

In Flanders, these specialised services are organised by the Provinces and by some cities with a high migrant population (Antwerp, Ghent, Malines, Leuven...) within the framework of their minorities policy and/or in collaboration with the integration services.

In 2002-2003 a survey was made of all the initiatives taken by the Flemish government (Ministerie voor Welzijn, Volksgezondheid en Gelijke Kansen) (Van Gucht/Hertog/Lannoy/Uytterhoeven 2003) in this area.

In this period 677 persons were employed in these services:

- 24 staff members
- 96 free-lancers
- 472 volunteers
- 85 others.

In the beginning of 2004, the central telephone service Babel, founded by the Flemish government in 2001, was divided into a telephone interpreting service and a central support cell that has to coordinate the sector and to control its quality.

In Brussels, there are two services, one of them (Bruxelles Accueil/Brussel Onthaal) is the only one that also offers services to individuals. It is also the only one that is accessible to persons from the whole country.

In Wallonia, community interpreting is organised by the CRIs (Centre Regional d'Intégration), that are organised on a regional level.

The federal government founded as an umbrella organisation the Federal Consultative Body for Community Interpreting and Translation (FOSOVET /COFETIS).

With respect to legal translation, the Belgian situation has been described by Y. Vanden Bosch (1999) in the framework of a project of the King Baudouin Foundation and by E. Hertog and Yolande Vanden Bosch in the first chapter of the report of the EU Grotius Project 98/GR/015 (Hertog 2001, www.legalintrans.info).

Due to the fact that the Belgian constitution states that the use of language is free, an interpreter must be made available free of charge at all stages of criminal proceedings.

A list of 'sworn' interpreters is usually kept by the Courts of First Instance. In each court, the magistrates have worked out their own system for recruitment and certification, but only in a few cases have the qualifications of the candidates really been checked.

The main problems in Community and Legal interpretation are recruitment, the quality of the interpreters, and their social status.

Recruitment and quality questions have to a great extent to do with the fact that the languages needed are not the languages normally taught at (translator and interpreter) schools, but the languages of the migrants, e.g. from the Mediterranean area, and of refugees and asylum-seekers (main nationalities in 2002: Rwanda, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Serbia and Montenegro, see UNHCR Statistical Yearbook on www.unhcr.org).

In recent years a lot has been done to train Legal and Community Interpreters.

As a result of the project of the King Baudouin Foundation and the EU Grotius Project, two pilot projects were started with the support of the Ministry of Justice to prepare more professional and better qualified legal interpreters and translators (Lessius Hogeschool Antwerp, Marie Haps Brussels).

The BKVTF/CBTIP has set up a course (Interact.J) in collaboration with the Ministry of Justice and some Belgian translators and interpreters schools (see www.cbtip-bkvtf.org).

Certain cities and Provinces have made efforts to improve the quality of community interpreters, by providing training sessions, with the help of the translator and interpreter schools, to some extent also in collaboration with Babel.

The question of the social status of these persons is very complex, and without extra financial means, no solution is possible.

Language learning

In secondary schools, at least 2 foreign languages are taught (French/Dutch, English), in some types additionally German, Spanish or, to much lesser degree, Italian.

At graduate level, foreign languages are taught at universities (languages and literature) and at schools for translators and interpreters.

In continuous education, foreign language learning on different levels is very popular. Also employment agencies give unemployed persons the possibility to increase their chances on the labour market by learning foreign languages.

Language technology

With the goal of supporting the co-operation between the government, research and industry, the Taalunie has created a platform, the Dutch/Flemish Platform for the Dutch Language in Language and Speech Technology (TST-Platform).

I.1.2. Language-related professions

I.1.2.1. "Pure-play" language-related professions (e.g. translator, interpreter, technical writer, language-learning materials writer and editor, etc.)

Translator/interpreter

The profession of translator/interpreter is not legally protected. Consequently, not only graduate translators/interpreters, but anyone can work as a translator/interpreter. For this reason, also in the employment surveys of university graduates in language and literature translators can be found as a (rather minor) category (see I.2).

Graduates with degrees in other fields (e.g. law) also find employment in this sector, and some even run a (specialised) translation agency.

Furthermore graduates from one-cycle (3-year) higher education (business and languages) or native speakers without any translation training find employment in the field.

Employers often do not select on the basis of degrees, but on (supposed) competences.

Some feel the wages they have to pay to university graduates to be too high and therefore hire graduates with a degree from a shorter (3 year) higher education programme (Clijsters 2002, Rura et al. 2004).

The BKVTF/CBTIP is the professional organisation of translators and interpreters. In 2003 it had 461 members, most of them self-employed translators (Annuaire 2003-2004).

To become a member, one needs to have a graduate degree in languages (language and literature, translator/interpreter) or to pass a specific examination set by the organisation.

Conference interpreters have their own international association AIIC. There is a regional office in Belgium, AIIC has 300 conference interpreters available in Belgium, who are almost all situated in Brussels (www.aiic.net).

Technical Writer

There is no specific training for technical writing. The job is done by language graduates or by specialists from the relevant field.

Technical writers have their own association, the (Belgian Chapter of the) STC (Society for Technical Communication).

Terminologist

Terminology is part of the training of translators and interpreters - at ISTI it is also part of the postgraduate course on translation and language industry (DESS en traduction et industrie de la langue).

As most companies are rather small, they do not have full-time terminologists. In most cases, terminology is carried out by the translator in preparation of or during the translation.

Although it is also open to people from the language industry, the Flemish-Dutch organisation for terminology, NL-TERM, has so far remained a solely academic society.

Language graduates are also employed in a variety of other language-related jobs:

(Translation) project manager: in bigger translation agencies project managers supervise larger projects.

Corrector/reviser/proof reader

Publishing companies often hire correctors/revisers/proofreaders for their publications. These persons are not selected primarily on the basis of the degree they obtained, but on their language skills, esp. their writing skills (Rura et al. 2004).

Language material writer:

Publishing companies have -at least for traditional written materials- no full-time language learning material writers, the materials are written by teachers or others.

For electronic materials the situation is partly different: some specialised companies employ full time language material developers.

Language teacher

Teachers for (the upper grades of) secondary schools are in most cases university graduates in languages, but graduates in translation/interpreting are also employed as teachers.

I.1.2.2. “Ancillary” language-related professions (e.g. export assistant, multilingual web site manager, jobs in international publishing, etc.)

As Belgium is an export-oriented country, many companies have regular contacts with foreign clients. Consequently, it is necessary to have people with a good command of foreign languages in different departments/divisions: sales, logistics, PR, marketing, reception, secretarial office, customer service... These jobs are partly done by language graduates.

Jobs in international publishing are rare.

Furthermore, in the tourist sector a knowledge of foreign languages is necessary in many jobs.

I.2. Language graduate employment in the language-related professions: status quo

The surveys on employment come from different sources and are only partially comparable, as they are structured differently and made for different purposes.

Universities in the Flemish Community

The presentation is limited to Germanic and Romance languages, as there are no quantitative data available for other language (and culture) degrees such as Slavic or Oriental languages.

In the academic year 2001-2002 445 students obtained a degree in Germanic languages, 193 in Romance languages.

In 2002-2003, there were 2041 students, studying Germanic languages and 841 studying Romance languages at Flemish universities (Statistisch Jaarboek 2003).

The Germanic languages offered are Dutch (as mother tongue), English, German and (at UG) Swedish.

The Romance languages taught are French, Spanish and Italian.

There are no data available on the distribution over the different languages.

From 2004-2005 on students can combine the study of a Germanic and a Romance language.

Employment surveys are made separately for the different languages/language combinations.

They were made for the self-evaluation report on the occasion of the evaluation procedure (a quality control procedure) in 1999/2000 and are referred to in the public report of the evaluation commissions (VLIR 2000 and 2002).

In addition, the KUL makes an annual survey of their graduates (see KUL 2001).

University Graduates in Germanic Languages and Literature (Dutch, English, German) (in %)

	KUL 2001	KUL 1997-98	UG 1998	UIA 1999
Total number	124		266	483
Secondary education	32	42	34	53,83
Universities	10,07	11	7,5	
Government	6,67	10	9,4	8,7
Socio-cultural sector	1,33	4	6,6	
Private sector*	48	32	40	25,26
Others		1		
Unemployed			8,3	4,97

* profit/non-profit, industry/services

University Graduate in Romance Languages and Literature (French, Spanish, Italian) (in %)

	KUL 2001	UG 98	VUB	UIA 95
Total number	36	61		
Secondary education	39	48,1	25	60
Universities	11	3,7	16	
Government	5,5	1,9		10
Socio-cultural sector	2,78			
Private sector*	38	46,3	59	22

* profit/non-profit; industry/services/culture

As can be seen from the surveys, a large percentage of university language graduates are still employed in traditional fields like secondary school teaching:

- Germanic languages: 32-53,83%
- Romance languages: 25-60%.

There seem to be regional differences: UIA for example has the highest percentage for both Germanic and Romance languages, but this might be accidental.

As is stated in different reports (UG 1998 and VLIR 2000), this percentage is diminishing (UG Germanic languages: 34% versus 42,7% 10 years earlier, UIA Romance languages).

University jobs (research) account for about 10% (Germanic languages) or 10-16% (Romance languages) of employment.

Other public sector jobs range between:

- 6,67 and 10% (Germanic languages),
- 5,5 and 10% (Romance languages).

The rest are employed mainly in the private sector, especially in the tertiary sector:

- Germanic Languages: between 25,26 and 48%

- Romance Languages: between 22 and 59%.

In greater detail:

UG 1998:

- Germanic Languages: office work (14,6%), commercial services (11,8%) journalism and editing (8,5%) are often mentioned, 3,3% work as a translator/corrector

- Romance languages: banking/insurance: 11,1%, commercial services 9,3%.

KUL 2001:

- Germanic languages: commercial services 7,35%

- Romance languages: commercial services, banking/insurance each 6,25%.

The number of self-employed university language graduates is small:

UG 1998:

- Germanic languages: 2,4%

KUL 2001:

- Germanic languages: 3 out of 50 (2,44%)

- Romance languages : 0 out of 23

(compare: for all graduates of KUL: 2001 8,36%; 1999 even 11,12%).

Only few language graduates from universities are employed in so called a-typical jobs (VLIR 2000/2002).

Asked about the direct relevance of their specific degree for their job, less than half of the KUL 2001 graduates give a positive answer (Germanic languages 40,79%, Romance languages 44,44%).

Indeed, between 23,68 % (Germanic languages) and 8,33% (Romance languages) state that their degree is not necessary at all (KUL 2001).

The evaluation commissions claim that graduates are well prepared for a job as a teacher or as a researcher. For the rest, the programmes are not well tuned to the demands of the labour market. This has as a consequence that many graduates do postgraduate studies to get better chances in the labour market.

As reasons for their recruitment, graduates from KUL often (more than 25%) mention (in %):

	Germanic languages	Romance languages
University degree	55,84	54,29
Motivation	62,34	54,29
Flexibility	25,97	(17,14)
Sociability	32,47	(22,86)
Language knowledge	46,75	62,86

Furthermore, the status of the degree from the KUL was cited as a decisive factor by 14,29 % of the alumni, which means that it is considered as important as study results (KUL 2001).

Language graduates do not always get wages in accordance to their degree: in the UG 1998 survey, between 15,5 (Romance languages) and 28,8% (Germanic languages) of respondents indicate that they earn lower wages than would be normal for a graduate.

Universities in the French Community

In the academic year 2001-2002 107 students obtained a degree in Germanic languages, 208 in Romance languages (www.cref.be).

No information was available on their employment.

Translators and interpreters schools in the Flemish Community

In the academic year 2001-2002 484 students obtained a degree from a translators and interpreters school, 458 as translator, 26 as interpreter.

In 2002-2003 there were 2833 students studying in translators and interpreters schools (Statistisch jaarboek 2003).

Students study Dutch and two foreign languages out of a (varying) range comprising: Arabic, Danish, English, French, German, Greek, Italian, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish.

Since 2002-2003, and thanks to (temporary) special financial support from the Flemish Ministry of Education, Hungarian, Polish and Czech too are offered as full courses, each in one different school. The Ministry and the schools see this as a contribution to solving the linguistic problems arising out of the enlargement of the European Union.

Various other languages such as Chinese, Arabic, Turkish or Lithuanian are offered as optional courses.

Until a few years ago, English was by far the most frequently studied language (VLOR 1997, graduates from 1980-1994):

- English: 60%
- French: 48%
- Spanish: 35%
- German: 29%
- Italian: 13%
- Russian: 9%
- Portuguese 2,6%
- Danish: 2%

but in the meantime, the position of Spanish has strengthened, whereas the position of German has weakened.

Employment (in %)

	VLOR 1997	Hogent 2001	Vlekho*
Total number	307	808	
Secondary education	14	11,9	10
Government	11,3	6,3	
Socio-cultural sector		1,9	
Translation/communication *	6	5,2	35

Private*	67,5	74,1	55
Industry	47,2	24,6	
Services	20,3	41,3	

*estimations;

translation/communication: 15%, interpretation 10%, journalism 10%

private and public sector: 55%

The very low percentage for translation/communication may seem surprising, but it relates only to pure translation/interpreting agencies.

Also a lot of employees in the private sector do translation as (part of) their job, so the number of translators/interpreters rises to 12-17,9%.

In the Hogent 2001 survey, in 1999 at least part-time translating was done by 51% and part-time interpreting by 8% of respondents; only office work has a higher score, with 56%.

However, almost all graduates (86,5%) say they need their knowledge of foreign languages in their job.

That translating is not the main activity exercised can be explained by the fact that translating as such is not widely required in industry (cf. Clijsters 2002, who states that it has the lowest priority of all writing tasks).

The duality between the (name of the) degree (translator/interpreter) and the professional situation (which does not exist only in Flanders) is reflected in the VLOR 'job profile' and in the 'training profiles' for translators and interpreters that are derived from it; these profiles explicitly call the translators/interpreters multilingual communicators and in addition to translating/interpreting identify as 'functional units' communication in the mother tongue and in the foreign language (VLOR 1997).

Frequent tasks in the private sector are:

- office work,
- selling/translating,
- language training.

Administrative and managerial staff can be divided into 3 categories, depending of the kind of work they do; the division is as follows (in %):

	VLOR 1997	Hogent 2001
Clerical	74,2	77
Middle management	19	13,5
Senior management	7,8	9,5

A major difference with university language graduates lies in the percentage of self-employed persons. While of the university graduates there are only 2,4% self-employed, the percentage with translator/interpreter graduates is more than 10% higher:

	VLOR 1997	Hogent 2001
Employee	74,2	94*
Self-employed	14,2	13,5

*some work partly in as an employee , partly on a self-employed basis.

Self-employed persons mainly work as translator, interpreter, subtitler, language trainer or in banking, insurance. Some have their own firm.

Employers especially appreciate in graduates of translators and interpreters schools:

- the knowledge of foreign languages: 4,15 (on a five-point scale)
- the general level of the programme: 4,06
- the knowledge of the mother tongue: 4,03.

Further are considered as good:

- translation skills: 3,90,
- flexibility: 3,88,
- theoretical insight: 3,88,
- communicative skills: 3,79,
- teamwork: 3,66,
- problem solving capacity: 3,55.

Lacking is familiarity with business practice and with commercial topics (Hinderdael 2003).

In general, the graduates themselves judge their training very positively (VLOR 1997 81%, Hogent 2001 78%). In the first place they appreciate its versatility and the good level of the programme.

The level of the job corresponds closely with the level of the degree (VLOR 1997 60%, Hogent 2001 even 73,5%).

In terms of the sort of job they do, only a minority sees a direct correspondence with their specific degree (VLOR 1997 44%, Hogent 2001 42%). Nevertheless most are satisfied with their job (VLOR 1997 80%, Hogent 2001 77%).

This could mean that for the job they do, no specific degree content is needed, but that the programme they have followed is broad enough to offer a range of possibilities on the labour market.

It must be added too that, like university graduates, part of the graduates from translators and interpreters schools also do postgraduate studies to increase their chances on the labour market: in the Hogent 2001 survey 5% indicate that they follow a full programme. Fully 57,5% of all 1980-94 graduates stated that they had attended one or another further training course after having graduated (VLOR 1997). Most frequently attended are courses on business, ICT, foreign languages, teacher training.

Translators and interpreters schools in the French Community

Students study French and two foreign languages out of a (varying) range, comprising Arabic, Chinese, Danish, Dutch, English, German, Greek, Italian, Portuguese, Russian, Turkish, Spanish.

Several other languages such as Greek, Norwegian, Polish, Portuguese or Swedish are offered as optional courses.

In the academic year 2001-2002 325 students obtained a degree from a translators and interpreters schools (www.statistiques.cfwb.be).

In terms of the employment of graduate, information is available for only one school.

	Marie Haps 2001-03*
Total number	212
Secondary education	10-15
Government	
Socio-cultural sector	
Translation/communication*	25-30
Others*	55-65

* estimations

translation/communication: full-time or part-time

others: private and public sector plus continuing studies

I.3. New developments and new professional demands in the language and language-related industries

I.3.1. The impact of European integration and of globalisation: new directions, re-organisation

As in other countries of the European Union the enlargement of the Union will undoubtedly increase international contacts and so increase the need for (new) foreign languages and foreign language skills, both in the 'Western' countries and in the new member states.

Although it is probable that a large part of these contacts will be in English (and/or German, French) as a lingua franca, the knowledge of the languages of the new member states will be of interest.

In Flanders the Ministry of Education has taken an initiative to reach this goal (see I.2).

The impact of globalisation is of the same nature.

Furthermore globalisation is leading to more international cooperation in major international agencies, a phenomenon which is facilitated by new technologies. Of course, this has consequences in terms of the method of working.

I.3.2. New professional demands and professional profiles in the language-related professions

The new professional demands and profiles have not primarily to do with European integration or globalization, but with other, especially technological evolutions in the professional field.

I. 3.2.1 Communications from international organisations

I.3.2.2. Communications from employers, employers' organisations and other organisations

As there are no communications available from Belgian employers' organisations, this part is based on observations that are made in other countries but are also relevant to the Belgian situation.

Some specific sorts of translation and interpreting have become more important. These include localization and subtitling in translation, community and legal interpreting, web-conferencing, and web-streaming in interpreting (Kalina 2004 for interpreting).

The growing importance of offering integrated services (from manuscript to publication) makes it necessary for the translator to be acquainted with several aspects of pre- and post-translation (Vollmar 2001).

The volume of significant (international) orders necessitates collaboration between translators, in real or virtual teams. This has become easier by technological developments, but these also require new skills from professionals, who have to adapt their methods (terminology management, translation support, document analysis, workflow management, see Mc Callum whose description applies not only to the United Nations, but also to all major organisations).

New technologies are leading to changes not only in translating, also in (language) training e.g. (e-learning).

I.3.2.3. Results of local / regional / national surveys

A few recent surveys are available that give a differentiated view on the use and needs of foreign languages in the private sector.

Verhaert 2002 made a survey of the use of foreign languages in more than 200 companies that employ graduates from a 3 year programme in business and languages from the Karel de Grote-Hogeschool, Antwerp.

He differentiated between internal and external use of the language and also compared the situation in different sectors (in %):

	total		Industry		Building		Trade (wholesale/retail)		Transport/storag e /communication		Finance	
	Int	Ext	Int	Ext	Int	Ext	Int	Ext	Int	Ext	Int	ext
French	45	89	41	95	0	100	55	90	38	91	46	97
English	43	92	57	81	0	100	45	94	52	100	23	87
German	12	56	14	89	0	0	16	77	23	84	8	56
Spanish	4	21	0	11	0	0	13	32	2	20	3	15
Other	3	12	0	0	0	0	13	29	7	11	0	10

Clijsters 2002 presents the results of two studies by students with SMEs in Limburg and Flemish Brabant (in %):

	Limburg	Flemish Brabant
French	70	86,2

German	38	31,3
English	30	33,3

In his Hogent survey, Hinderdael 2003 found on a five-point scale:

- French: 4,31
- English: 4,16
- German: 2,94
- Spanish: 2,36
- Russian: 1,18
- Italian: 1,04.

It turns out that there are rather important differences: local, sectorial, internal-external use. But it also becomes clear that foreign language skills are not only needed in big cities and in big international companies, as is sometimes suggested.

A comparison with the languages studied (see I.2) shows that there is a serious discrepancy with the needs of the labour market, as they emerge from the surveys, but such discrepancies are found not only with language graduates.

On the other hand, there are no indications that there is a lack of employees with a good command of specific languages.

I.3.2.4. Outcomes of academic studies and research

It is worth mentioning what S. Kalina (2004) wrote about the changes in the working situation of conference interpreters, for they do not apply only to Germany, but seem to have a fairly general relevance.

They concern among other things:

- the way of speaking: less spontaneous speech, the speech is written out and is read out,
- the use of multimedia in the presentation,
- the use of another language than the mother-tongue by the speaker,
- the possibility of non-live interpretation.

All this requires greater adaptability of the interpreter.

I.4. Contacts and co-operation between the language and language-related industries and HE institutions

As is stated in the VLIR reports of the evaluation commissions contacts between universities and the professional world are very rare.

The following description concerns translators and interpreters schools almost exclusively.

I.4.1. Through international organisations

Through the annual meeting SCIC-Universities and the pedagogical help of SCIC the schools stay in contact with the daily practice of the interpreters in the European Commission.

Representatives from SCIC, the European Parliament etc. are also invited to evaluate the final exams of the students and confront the students with the real professional needs of international organisations.

I.4.2. Through professional associations at the national or regional level

In professional organisations like BKVTF/CBTIP and AIIC individuals or commissions are responsible for contacts with the schools and make it possible to get into contact with the professional world.

All Belgian translators and interpreters schools are corporate member of BKVTF/CBTIP.

In general, employers' organisations are interested in education and have their specific committees dealing with the relation between (especially secondary) education and the labour market.

They show their special interest in foreign language in several initiatives: in 2001, the European Year of Languages, the VEV, the Flemish employers' organisation, formulated strategic aims for a Flemish policy towards multilingualism.

And in 2002 they organised a seminar on foreign language needs 'How multilingual are your employees' (www.voka.be).

I.4.3. Through direct co-operation between HE institutions or departments and industry partners (regional or local training schemes, course-related work placements or other)

In some schools an internship is an obligatory part of the curriculum.

When schools take initiatives to prepare their students for their entry to the labour market, such as job fairs, application seminars, they invite representatives from industry to inform the students about vacancies, working conditions etc.

Occasionally external help is also offered for the thesis the student has to write, sometimes in connection with the internship.

In the framework of the so-called 'service to the community' of the school, staff and students work for external clients in the field of translation, interpreting, etc.

In some research programmes, cooperation with industry is required as a condition for funding. For example, in Flanders the IWT-Vlaanderen (Institute for the Promotion and Innovation by Science and Technology in Flanders) supports projects in technology transfer. The professional world was also represented in the EU Grotius Project on legal translation.

Representatives of industry can be members of the Board of the school, provide information about needs and the tools used, and so contribute to the policy of the school, in particular with respect to the development of the curriculum.

I.5. Impact of language industry developments and new professional demands on *existing* specialist HE language courses (status quo)

I. 5.1. Programmes and courses

New developments have already lead to a more practice-oriented curriculum, e.g. by giving more importance to computer skills and by introducing modules on subtitling, web localisation, community interpreting, etc.

Furthermore, some schools offer training courses on these themes within the framework of life-long-learning. ISTI, Brussels, e.g. offers a post-graduate course in translation and the language industry and the translators and interpreters school of

Erasmus Hogeschool, Brussels, offers short so called 'master trainings' in fields like localisation or technical writing.

University graduate programmes also sometimes offer specialised modules, but in most cases they are not directly labour market-oriented (VLIR 2000/2002).

I. 5.2. Definitions of learning outcomes

Representatives of the language industry were involved in drawing up the profile of the profession of translator/interpreter in Flanders.

I. 5.3. Methods

More and more active methods and forms of collaboration which are usual in the professional world are being introduced into the training of language graduates.

I. 5.4. Resources

Except for the financial support from the Flemish Ministry of Education for the courses for Middle and Eastern European languages and the research funds, no extra resources are available for the realisation of the aims.

PART II NEEDS AND CONSTRAINTS

II.1 Improved co-operation between the language and language-related industries and HE institutions

Cooperation between HE-institutions and industry could be improved by

- making internships longer and more varied, so that students get more insight in real-world working conditions,
- inviting specialists from outside to give courses or lectures,
- giving HE-staff the possibility to work temporarily in industry (Hinderdael 2003).

It would also be interesting to create a formal platform for contacts between HE and the employers organisations.

An umbrella organisation of national platforms for contacts between HE and employers' organisations could help to coordinate national initiatives.

II.2. Identification of needs for curriculum innovation in response to new professional demands

II.2.1. Programmes and courses

The introduction of BA/MA degrees and the curriculum innovation that goes with it is a good opportunity to introduce adaptations to new developments in the professional world.

Taking into consideration the fact that rather a small number of graduates work as translators or interpreters, the Flemish schools decided to offer different master degrees, not only in translation and interpreting but also in multilingual communication and in journalism.

Although the master degree is exclusively of the academic type, a professional orientation is not excluded, but it may not always be easy to reconcile academic and professional aims.

The fact that the master degree in Flanders is a 1 year degree might make it very difficult to integrate longer internship periods.

To meet new professional demands, new languages/language combinations and new specialised modules can be introduced. These modules could be taught by specialists from the field (translators/interpreters/subtitlers etc, but also people from the language software industry). What is important in this respect is that students are made 'capable of finding answers to questions such as why and what instead of just how' (Jaatinen/Immonen).

Furthermore, it is stressed that over-specialisation should be avoided because graduates should be versatile, and that learning to learn is increasingly important (Vollmar 2001).

Cooperation is sometimes hindered by administrative constraints (problems in combining a job in a school with a job in industry) or even by practical constraints like time schedules.

In general, employers stress the necessity to prepare graduates better for their entry to the labour market (see e.g. Hinderdael 2003).

In particular:

- the command of the mother tongue can be improved

- with respect to foreign languages, it is stated that students' oral fluency is often insufficient; and especially that commercial competences such as telephoning are lacking
 - in Belgium a good knowledge of French is indispensable. Sometimes it is argued that French should be made a compulsory part of the curriculum
 - translation courses should be as practice-oriented as possible. In addition to translation, revision and proof reading should also be trained, as well as summarizing and writing in a foreign language
 - a good knowledge of (information) technology and of general applications (Excel, PowerPoint, etc) and specific tools for translators is needed
 - the basics of business economics and of management techniques, especially of 'translation economics' (what is the cost of a translation) should be part of the curriculum
 - the internship period (if possible also partly in a foreign country) should be long and varied enough for the student to get acquainted with all aspects of professional life
 - in addition to knowledge and skills, personal and social/commercial competences (behaviours) such as assertiveness, team-working, independence should be given attention.
- These are already dealt with in the job and training profiles, but should be actualised and worked out further.

There is clear evidence of positive reactions by Flemish employers and former graduates with respect to the programme content (I.2). Some of the needs that are formulated are already (partly) being met. As the importance of competences is receiving greater attention, more and more programmes are becoming competence based.

However, regular contact needs to be maintained and good practice made general.

II.2.2. Definitions of learning outcomes

The introduction of the BA/MA degrees is a good opportunity to formulate learning outcomes more explicitly and to give greater consideration to professional needs.

II.2.3. Methods

Methods should be adapted to a more competence-oriented form of training. This implies that self-directed tasks and teamwork should come to play a more important role.

II.2.4. Resources

References

Beroepsprofiel vertaalkundige vertaler-tolk (m/v), VLOR 1997 (studie 37) (= VLOR 1997)

Opleidingsprofielen vertaalkunde. Opleidingsprofiel licentiaat-vertaler; Opleidingsprofiel licentiaat-tolk. VLOR 1997 (studie 59)

De onderwijsvisitatie Germaanse Talen. Een onderzoek naar de kwaliteit van de opleidingen Taal- en Letterkunde: Germaanse talen aan de Vlaamse universiteiten. VLIR, april 2002 www.vlir.be (= VLIR 2002)

De onderwijsvisitatie Romaanse Talen. Een onderzoek naar de kwaliteit van de opleidingen Romaanse Talen aan de Vlaamse universiteiten VLIR, november 2000 www.vlir.be (= VLIR 2000)

Smedts, D. Onderzoek loopbaanopbouw 2001. Tewerkstellingssituatie Alumni K.U.Leuven 2000. K.U.Leuven, 2002 (= KUL 2001)

Taal- en Letterkunde Germaanse Talen: tewerkstellingsgegevens. Analyse op basis van beschikbare gegevens d.d. eind december 1998. Universiteit Gent. Adviescentrum voor studenten, internal document (= UG 1998)

Taal- en Letterkunde Romaanse Talen: tewerkstellingsgegevens. Analyse op basis van beschikbare gegevens d.d. eind oktober 1998. Universiteit Gent. Adviescentrum voor studenten, internal document (= UG 1998)

Enquête naar de werkgelegenheid van oud-studenten van het Departement vertaalkunde Mercator Hogeschool (1990-2000). Hogeschool Gent, oktober 2001 (= Hogent 2001)

Hinderdael, Mike, Resultaten werkveldenquête – maart 2003. Hogeschool Gent, Departement Vertaalkunde, intern document

Rura, Lidia, Van Boxtael Hans Robert, Van der Putten, Sigyn, Report on the labour market assessment of a translator's/interpreter's diploma of the Hogeschool Gent and the alumni's employment prospects. Hogeschool Gent Department of Translation Studies. 05.05.2004, paper (= Rura et al. 2004)

Clijsters, Willy, Vreemde talen in het Vlaamse bedrijfsleven, met speciale aandacht voor de Limburgse en Vlaams-Brabantse KMO's, in: Romaneske 27 (2002), nr.4, 2-6

Verhaert, Raf, KdG Departement Handelswetenschappen en Bedrijfskunde, Enquête bij afgestudeerden en bedrijven. www.voka.be (= Verhaert 2002)

Vanden Bosch, Yolande, Gerechtstolken/-vertalers: medewerkers van het gerecht. Opleiding en organisatie van het beroep Rapport voor de Koning Boudewijnstichting, Project 'Justitie in beweging', 1999

Hertog, Erik, Vanden Bosch Yolande, De gerechtstolk in België: een status questionis, *Linguistica Antverpiensia* XXXIV (2000), 89-110

Hertog, Erik, Aequitas. Access to Justice across Language and Culture in the EU; Grotius Project 98/GR/131. 2001. www.legalintrans.info

Hertog, Erik, Aequitas. Access to Justice across Language and Culture in the EU. Grotius Project 2001/GRP/015, 2003. www.legalintrans.info

Van Gucht, Jan, Hertog, Erik, Lannoy Katrien en Uytterhoeven Erik, Sociaal tolken en vertalen in Vlaanderen. Schets en model van een landschap. Studie uitgevoerd door de Hogeschool voor Wetenschap & Kunst en de Lessius Hogeschool in opdracht van het Ministerie van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap.

Uytterhoeven, Erik, Sociaal tolken in Vlaanderen. Een beknopte evolutieschets, in: *Hermes*. Mededelingenblad van de onderzoeksgroepen vertaal- en tolkwetenschap Vlekho, 1/3, juni 2004, 38-39. www.vlekho.wenk.be

Uytterhoeven, Erik, Sociaal tolken in Vlaanderen. Schets en model van een landschap. Vlekho - Lessius, in: *Hermes*. Mededelingenblad van de onderzoeksgroepen vertaal- en tolkwetenschap Vlekho, 1/1, november 2003, 2-3. www.vlekho.wenk.be

Gouden Gids. Boekdeel 3. 2003-2004

Chambre Belge des traducteurs, Interprètes et Philologues. Belgische Kamer van Vertalers, Tolken en Filologen, *Annuaire 2003-2004*. Jaarboek 2003-2004 (= *Annuaire 2003-2004*)

Freigang, Karl-Heinz, Wie reagiert die Ausbildung auf die aktuellen Trends in der Berufspraxis, in: *MDÜ* 2001/2, 5-6

Kalina, Sylvia, Mehrsprachige Genies mit Superhirn? Veränderungen im Konferenzdolmetschen der letzten 50 Jahre, in: *MDÜ* 2004/2, 58-61

Schmitt, Peter A., Vom TippEx zum Translation Memory. Veränderungen des Berufsbilds des Übersetzers in den letzten 30 Jahren, in: *MDÜ* 2004/2, 55-57

Vollmar, Gabriele, Das Zauberwort heißt Nachhaltigkeit. Anforderungen der Praxis an die Übersetzer-Ausbildung, in: *MDÜ* 2001/2, 7-9

Ministerie van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap Departement Onderwijs, *Statistisch jaarboek van het Vlaams onderwijs. Schooljaar 2002-2003* (= *Statistisch jaarboek 2003*)

McCallum, Bob, Translation Technology at the United Nations. www.multilingual.com

Jaatinen, Hannu, Immonen, Jarkko, Finish University meets needs of translation industry. www.multilingual.com

Websites

taalunieversum.org/taal/technologie/

website of the Taalunie, the intergovernmental organisation of the Netherlands, Flanders and Suriname for co-operation in the field of the Dutch language, language teaching and literature,

www.aiic.net

website of the international association of conference interpreters

www.cbtip-bkvtf.org

website of the Belgian professional association of translators and interpreters

www.cire.be

website of an umbrella organisation dealing with the problems of refugees and foreigners

www.cref.be

website of the rectors' conference of the universities of the French Community

www.legalintrans.info

website of Aequitas. Access to Justice across Language and Culture in the EU

www.multilingual.com

website of Multilingual Computing, Inc., a company specialised in information for the localization, internationalization, translation and language technology industry

www.statbel.fgov.be

website of the Belgian National Institute of Statistics

www.statistiques.cfwb.be

website of the statistics service of the ETNIC (Entreprise publique de technologies, nouvelles de l' information et de la communication)

www.unhrc.org

website of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

www.vlekho.wenk.be

website of the Vlaamse Economische Hogeschool, Brussel (Hogeschool Wetenschappen en Kunst)

www.vlir.be

website of the rectors of the rectors' conference of the Flemish Community

www.vlhora.be

website of the Flemish Hogescholen

www.voka.be

website of the Flemish employers organisation

further: websites of translation/interpreting companies.

Abbreviations

AIIC	Association Internationale d'Interprètes de Conférence
BA/MA	bachelor/master
BKVTF/CBITP	Belgische Kamer van Vertalers, Tolken en Filologen/Chambre Belge des Traducteurs, Interpètes et Philologues
CRI	Centre Régional d'Intégration
DESS	Diplôme d'études supérieures spécialisées
FOD/SPF P&O	Federale Overheidsdienst Personeel en Organisatie/Service Public Fédéral Personnel et Organisation
FOSOVET /COFETIS	Federaal Overleg voor het Sociaal Vertalen en Tolken/ Concertation Fédérale pour la Traduction et l'Interprétariat Social
Hogent	Hogeschool Gent
ISTI	Institut Supérieur de Traducteurs et Interprètes (Haute Ecole de Bruxelles)
IWT-Vlaanderen	Instituut voor de aanmoediging van Innovatie door Wetenschap en Technologie in Vlaanderen.
KUL	Katholieke Universiteit Leuven
Marie Haps	Institut Libre Marie Haps (Haute Ecole Léonard De Vinci)
MDÜ	Mitteilungen für Dolmetscher und Übersetzer (Bundesverband der Dolmetscher und Übersetzer e.V.)
SCIC	Service Commun Interprétation-Conférences
STC	Society for Technical Communication
UG	Universiteit Gent
UIA	Universitaire Instelling Antwerpen
VEV	Vlaams Economisch Verbond
Vlekho	Vlaamse Economische Hogeschool, Brussel (Hogeschool Wetenschappen en Kunst)
VLIR	Vlaamse Interuniversitaire Raad
VLOR	Vlaamse Onderwijsraad
VUB	Vlaamse Universiteit Brussel